

**THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP, ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE,  
AND THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRUST ON SOUTH AFRICAN  
SOLDIERS' WILLINGNESS TO DEPLOY: AN EXPLORATORY  
STUDY**

**By**

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## **DECLARATION**

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Thulile Makhathini

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## ABSTRACT

The African continent cannot achieve economic development and growth without peace and stability. Militaries are therefore faced with increasing demands for peace support missions and border controls to ensure stability. As a result of its socio-political and geographic position, South Africa pledged to be part of the resolution to restore peace in Africa by deploying the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). The implication of this is that the SANDF needs willing soldiers to deploy for the successful completion of its missions. This study was therefore driven by the need to understand the influence of psychosocial factors on soldiers' willingness to deploy. Willingness to deploy is the most advantageous domain of individual mental preparedness for military deployments.

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on South African soldiers' willingness to deploy. The study was quantitative in nature, and a sample of 206 participants was drawn from two infantry units. The measuring instruments that were used were found to be valid and reliable. Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to test the hypothesised relationships between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy. Significant positive relationships were found between these variables. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the study model for willingness to deploy. PLS-SEM indicated that trust has a mediating effect on the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the SANDF can promote willingness to deploy by developing a healthy organisational climate and leadership behaviour (transformational and transactional leadership), and by fostering and enhancing trusting relationships between subordinates and their immediate leaders as well as the organisation. This will greatly benefit the SANDF, as willingness to deploy is crucial for deployment success. The recommendations and limitations presented possible avenues that could be explored for further research studies.

**Keywords:** Willingness to deploy; leadership; organisational climate; trust.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
AVE	Average variance extracted
Bn	Battalion
CAR	Central African Republic
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
NCO	Non-commissioned officer
OCM	Organisational Climate Measure
PLS	Partial least squares
PLS-SEM	Partial least squares structural equation modelling
PSOQ	Peace-Support Operation Questionnaire
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SA Army	South African Army
SAAF	South African Air Force
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAI	South African Infantry
SAMHS	South African Military Health Services
SAN	South African Navy
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Service
SD	Standard deviation
TFL	Transformational leadership
TIL	Trust in a leader
TSL	Transactional leadership
UN	United Nations
VIF	Variance inflation factor
WDQ	Willingness to Deploy Questionnaire
WTS	Work Trust Survey

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*“It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it.”*

*– Douglas MacArthur –*

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The African continent is plagued by pervasive armed conflict and instability. These conflicts have resulted in the outbreak of disease, poverty, despair, and refugee predicaments. Armed conflicts have seriously undermined the attainment of development, security, and democratic consolidation on the African continent (Heinecken & Ferreira, 2012). Mandrup (2008) believes that without peace and stability, the chances of economic development and growth in Africa are limited. There is therefore a need for African leaders and other role players to address and resolve the conflicts on the continent and to strengthen the foundation for durable peace and economic development (Neethling, 2006). In other words, the creation of peace and stability is the central key to creating a foundation for future development in Africa.

In view of the above, armed conflict in Africa is acute and there is a clear need for conflict interventions. It further highlights the need for countries to work together because of their interdependent nature. As part of its general foreign policy strategy, South Africa is committed to contributing to peace and stability by deploying soldiers of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in multinational peace support missions (Defence Web, 2019) in African member states such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Sudan. These peace support missions are under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) on the African continent as ordered by national government and in compliance with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) standby force pledge (Vrey & Mandrup, 2017). This means that the SANDF is contributing to preventing violent conflict from re-emerging and rebuilding the capabilities of society to resolve conflict in African countries by fostering cooperation among belligerent groups, assisting in humanitarian relief and rescue operations, restoring infrastructure, and assisting in implementing political reforms (Heinecken & Ferreira, 2012).

This involves working with many different armed forces, local actors, and international humanitarian aid organisations. According to Mandrup (2008), there are increasing international efforts to ensure peace and stability on the African continent, which thus stimulates unparalleled hope for a more secure, fair, democratic, and interconnected world. In his State of the Nation Address in 2006, former president Thabo Mbeki referred to the SANDF as “midwives of peace, stability and prosperity” (as cited in Mandrup, 2008). This statement clearly indicates the pivotal role that the SANDF plays in maintaining peace and security in Africa. Since South Africa is known as the most stable democratic state with a firm economy on the continent, expectations from other African countries have grown for the SANDF to play a leading role in peace support operations (Grobler & Robertson, 2012); there is therefore a need to have many soldiers who are willing to be deployed. The SANDF consists of four arms of services, namely the South African Army (SA Army), the South African Air Force (SAAF), the South African Navy (SAN), and the South African Military Health Services (SAMHS). The SA Army is the largest arm of service of the SANDF and deploys more peacekeepers than its counterparts (Mandrup, 2008).

The role of the SANDF is primarily to protect the nation against any form of military aggression (Republic of South Africa, 2002). For this reason, the SANDF deploys its soldiers within the country for border control operations and to assist the South African Police Service (SAPS) with crime prevention (Hennop, 2001) for a period of three to six months (Matjeke, 2016). This involves ensuring that the integrity of the borders is maintained by preventing transnational crime, human trafficking, undocumented migrants, and the unregulated transport of goods across the South African borderline between border posts (Hennop, 2001). In fact, the demand for the internal and external deployment of the SANDF continues to rise despite the declining of resources in the organisation (Mlangeni, 2016). The former in particular has drawn national attention due to the increased criminality along the South African land borders (Hennop, 2001). Cross-border criminality impacts negatively on the economy of the country and accordingly indirectly contributes to many social crises for the country. The deployment of the SANDF is therefore important for the safeguarding of the country and maintaining peace in Africa.

Kalamdien and Van Dyk (2009) emphasise that military deployments have unique emotional and physical challenges. Unlike civilian organisations, the military continually prepares for disaster and conflict (Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005). Deployments account for a significant amount of time away from home. There is thus a need for soldiers to be willing to deploy for effective execution of missions. Little is known about soldiers' attitudes towards their willingness to deploy in future deployments. There is no doubt that military deployments are never easy, but a positive attitude can help minimise stress and anxiety for service members (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009). This study argues that, as with any life-changing event, the more willing service members are to deploy, the more they will be able to deal and cope with the challenges that come with deployment.

Understanding the psychosocial factors that may have an impact on soldiers' willingness to deploy can be useful to the SANDF, as well as foreign countries involved in peacekeeping operations, because the military relies heavily on its personnel to operate effectively and professionally (Kelly, 2015). The benefit of deploying soldiers who are willing to deploy could be to avoid deploying soldiers who will not strive to perform their utmost best and diligently. Moreover, they will be unlikely to be vulnerable to stress and adjustment challenges during deployment. In support, Nkewu (2014) found that willingness to deploy had a positive impact on soldiers' psychological wellbeing. Soldiers, like employees of civilian organisations, are constantly searching for ways of finding meaning at work (Nkewu, 2014). This implies that soldiers desire a feeling that they contribute to something significant and substantial. When this happens, they develop willingness and enthusiasm to be part of the organisation's success.

Heere and Dickson (2008) believe that individuals with high psychological commitment and attitudinal loyalty develop willingness to participate in an activity. This corroborates with the view that a soldier's state of mind forms an important part of combat readiness as deployment can be complex and unpredictable (Shinga, 2015). Despite this background, there is a lack of research that focuses on factors that influence soldiers' willingness to deploy. This study proposes that the SANDF needs soldiers with willingness to deploy in order to operate effectively on military deployments.

According to Sweeney (2010), the glue that binds military personnel into a positive force and a combat multiplier is trust, caring, and competent leadership. The prevailing view of most organisations is that leaders exert the strongest influence on employee attitude and behaviour (Dhladhla, 2011). Equally, leadership is a major component of organisational success, mostly because leaders can influence and direct the workforce's activities and behaviour. In turn, the workforce can influence the success of the organisation (Gantasala & Padmakumar, 2011). This proves that leadership not only influences the normal functioning of employees, but also influences the completion of the organisation's tasks and the smooth realisation of its goals (Aucamp, 2014). Moreover, organisational leaders can shape and influence the culture and climate of the organisation (Bass & Avolio, 1993). According to Dhladhla (2011), military leaders are the backbone of the unit and their actions, decisions, and ultimately their personality traits influence the relationships and operations of the unit. As such, Shinga (2015) suggests that leaders exert great influence on a soldier's state of mind. This implies that military leaders may have a big role in a soldier's decision to deploy or not.

Notably, leadership is not an isolated function within an organisation. Sweeney (2010) believes that trust is an important factor of leadership because the leader's trustworthiness influences employees' willingness to accept the leader's influential directives. Furthermore, the environment in which an employee functions has shown to have an influence on an employee's attitudes and behaviours (Suifan, 2016). This therefore propels the need to investigate whether leadership behaviour, trust, and the work environment in which the soldiers operate have an influence on the subordinates' willingness to deploy.

Military operations involve considerable interdependence between the leader and the subordinates who bring diverse and specialised skills. In a military context, trust is crucial because military personnel often perform tasks that involve life-threatening situations (Collins & Jacobs, 2002). In other words, the risk of getting injured or killed and the use of weapons in military settings involve risks that are more tangible than in most civilian organisations (Sweeney, 2010). These risks are prevalent during both the period of training and operations. As such, the success of operations requires a high level of collaboration, trust, and cooperation between team members and the leader (Sweeney, 2010). Military organisations therefore demand that



soldiers place their fate in their leaders' hands as they willingly risk their lives to achieve the organisation's objectives during deployments (Collins & Jacobs, 2002). Collins and Jacobs (2002) further claim that soldiers who trust their leaders allow them a greater degree of influence regarding the soldiers' readiness to follow directives and their motivation to perform duties to complete the mission. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) suggest that within the military environment, trust in a leader is more important than trust in co-workers. This further emphasises the importance of leadership and trust in the military and raises the question of whether leadership and trust have an influence on a soldier's willingness to deploy.

One of the leading factors that influences the organisation's performance and its ability to reach its objectives is organisational climate. Organisational climate serves as a measure of employees' perceptions of or feelings about an organisation (Bann, Williams-Piehota, & Whittam, 2011). Paying attention to organisational climate has shown to lead to higher levels of organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee attitudes (Suifan, 2016). The human dimension is a critical aspect for combat readiness. It therefore becomes important to recognise that soldiers' readiness, motivation, and wellbeing are fundamental to the military's success (Nkewu, 2014; Shinga, 2015). Likewise, Nkewu (2014) maintains that for the SANDF to be successful in its responsibility of maintaining peace and stability in Africa, soldiers' willingness to deploy must measure high.

As with any life-changing event, the more willing service members are to deploy, the easier it will be for them to adjust to and cope with the change that goes along with peacekeeping challenges. The military regards human resources as an essential element to accomplish organisational objectives and for combat readiness (Kelly, 2015). It is therefore important to assess soldiers' willingness to deploy in order to guarantee exceptional performance.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The need to ensure that Africa is in a better position to respond to peace and security challenges warranted the establishment of a continental deployment that could assist with any crisis in Africa (Vrey & Mandrup, 2017). Considering that South Africa pledged to be part of the resolution to peace and security in Africa (Mandrup,

2008), the SANDF must deploy its soldiers. According to Nkewu (2014), military deployments are voluntary. The implication of this is that the SANDF needs willing soldiers for deployment. The question then arises as to how willing South African soldiers are to deploy in peace support operations as required by the South African White Paper on Defence (as cited in Mandrup, 2008). Little is known about soldiers' willingness to participate in deployments. Heere and Dickson (2008) believe that when individuals are willing to participate in an activity, they tend to exert more effort on that task due to their positive attitude. This study therefore suggests that it is critical that soldiers are willing to deploy. Deployments are complex and require soldiers to be alert and have positive attitudes (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009).

There are many factors that contribute to the success of any military peacekeeping operation. The obvious factors include the physical readiness of the force, the availability of financial resources and equipment, and psychological factors (Bester & Stanz, 2007; Shinga, 2015). The psychosocial factors that may have an impact on a soldier's willingness to deploy are often neglected. The most valuable asset of the SANDF is its soldiers and it is crucial for them to be willing to deploy. Thompson and Gignac (2001) argue that pre-deployment factors affect soldiers' ability to adapt and cope with the stressors encountered during peacekeeping missions. The authors claim that these pre-deployment factors include psychosocial factors. This study aims to fill this research gap by investigating the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on soldiers' willingness to deploy, with specific emphasis on external deployments. The study does not suggest that combat readiness factors such as material and training readiness are not important for force preparedness.

The impact of leadership and organisational climate on employees' attitudes is well documented (Stringer, 2002; Bann et al., 2011; Suifan, 2016). Despite this, there is a lack of studies that have tested propositions about the relationship between the variables of interest of this study. Another premise of this study is to bring attention to the psychosocial features of the workplace that could have an impact on soldiers' willingness to deploy, which could subsequently impact soldiers' wellbeing and their performance during deployments.

There is no doubt that military deployments are dangerous and unpredictable (Heineken & Ferreira, 2012). Leaders and subordinates are often required to perform tasks that are psychologically and physically demanding and if the will to deploy is absent, it is unlikely that they will be able to cope with these heavy demands. This argument is based on Nkewu's (2014) study, where he found that willingness to deploy contributes to soldiers' psychological wellbeing. It is suggested that military personnel should be willing to deploy in order to be effective and for the SANDF to achieve its deployment objective. Nkewu (2014) found that soldiers who are willing to deploy display positive attitudes and maintain a high level of psychological wellbeing and morale, which will subsequently help them fight eagerly in order to win the battle during combat (Gabriel, 1988) or in peace support operations. Nkewu (2014) further emphasises that military personnel must measure high on their willingness to deploy for the SANDF to be successful in its responsibility of maintaining peace and stability in Africa.

Engelbrecht, Heine, and Mahembe (2014) are of the view that willingness is related to work engagement and employees who demonstrate engagement tend to put extra effort into their work and reach optimal performance. This means that soldiers should be in a state of being prepared to participate in deployment activities and be ready for the risks that come with deployment.

Furthermore, a soldier who lacks the will to deploy may be more vulnerable to the negative effects of deployments (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009). For instance, a soldier with a negative attitude towards deployment faces a risk of mentally withdrawing from a mission. This may place his or her co-workers at risk as they can be confronted with various life-threatening situations during military operations (Lloyd, Van Dyk, & De Kock, 2009). The reason for their psychological withdrawal from the mission could be rooted in their unwillingness to deploy. Disregarding the importance of willingness to deploy could create challenges that can have a significant negative influence on both the soldier and the SANDF. Nkewu (2014) agrees that psychosocial factors are crucial for the success of military operations and understanding what contributes to soldiers' willingness to deploy within organisational borders is important to plan and design interventions that can enhance soldiers' willingness to deploy.

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on South African soldiers' willingness to deploy, which contributes to efforts of peace and security in Africa and the borders of the country. This aim will be achieved by seeking to examine the relationship between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and soldiers' willingness to deploy and the mediating role of trust. The findings of the study will provide answers to the following research questions:

- Is there a relationship between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy?
- Is there a relationship between leadership behaviour and trust?
- Is there a relationship between organisational climate and trust?
- Is there a relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy?
- Is there a relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy?
- Does trust mediate the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy?
- Does trust mediate the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy?

#### **1.3.1 Theoretical objectives**

The main theoretical objective of this study is to conduct an in-depth literature review of the dependent variables of soldiers' willingness to deploy. The study is guided by the following theoretical objectives:

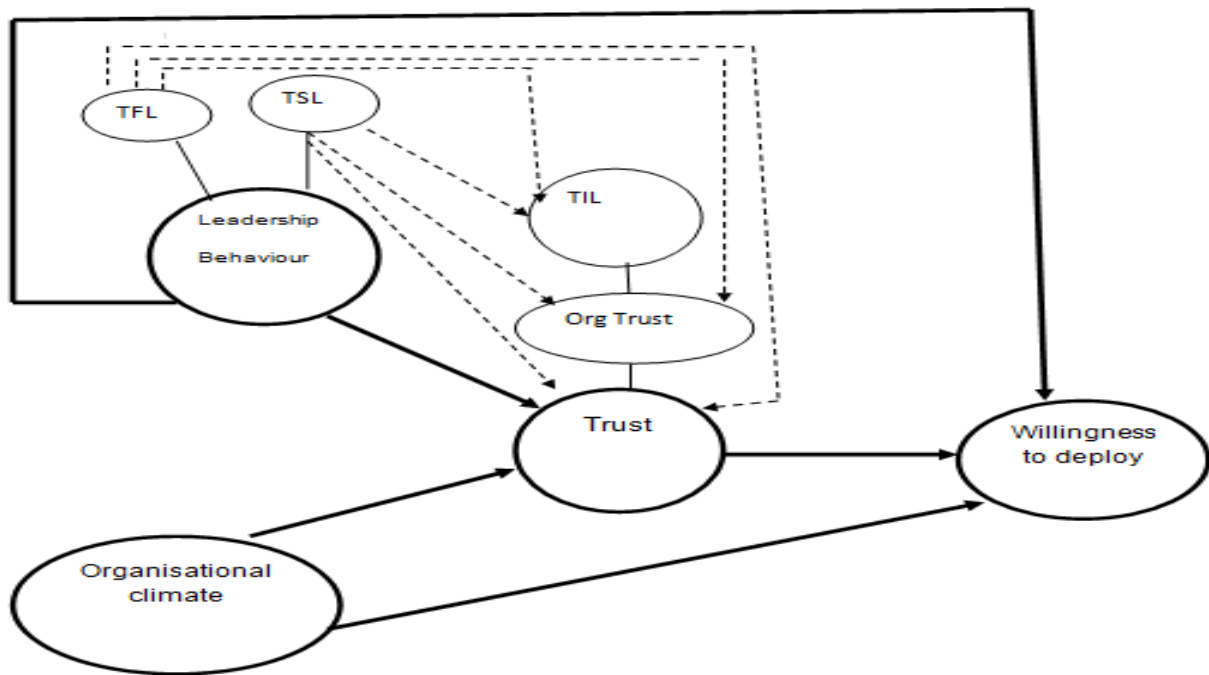
- To conceptualise leadership behaviour from a theoretical perspective.
- To conceptualise organisational climate from a theoretical perspective.
- To conceptualise trust from a theoretical perspective.
- To conceptualise willingness to deploy.
- To conceptualise the theoretical relationships between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy.

### 1.3.2 Empirical objectives

Empirical objectives will be used in the form of exploratory research methodology in order to determine the role of relationships between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust on soldiers' willingness to deploy. The study will be guided by the following specific empirical objectives:

- To evaluate the relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader.
- To evaluate the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader.
- To evaluate the relationship between organisational climate and soldiers' perception of organisational trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between organisational climate and soldiers' level of trust in a leader.
- To evaluate the relationship between organisational climate and overall trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust.
- To evaluate the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy.
- To evaluate the influence of leadership behaviour on willingness to deploy.
- To evaluate the relationship between trust and willingness to deploy.
- To evaluate the mediating effect of trust on the relationship between leadership behaviour and soldiers' willingness to deploy.
- To evaluate the mediating effect of trust on the relationship between organisational climate and soldiers' willingness to deploy.

This study therefore aims to investigate the proposed model (see Figure 1.1).



Notes: TIL=Trust in leader; Org Trust= Organisational trust; TSL=Transactional leadership; TFL=Transformational leadership

**Figure 1.1: Proposed model of psychosocial factors that influence willingness to deploy**

#### 1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was aimed at contributing to the understanding of the influence of leadership, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on South African soldiers' willingness to deploy. No previous research study was found to have investigated these constructs together, specifically within the military context. This urged the researcher to fill this gap. The SANDF plays a pivotal role in ensuring peace and security in Africa and is responsible for ensuring that the state security goals are achieved (Mandrup, 2008). The practical implication of the results of this study could benefit the SANDF, considering that it needs a large number of soldiers who are willing to deploy in order to fulfil its objectives and goals. For this reason, it is important to deploy willing soldiers with a positive mindset and attitude who will perform their utmost best. This study will be helpful in designing programmes that may enhance soldiers' willingness to deploy. It will also serve as reference for future research on the subject of willingness to deploy.

## **1.5 RESEARCH PROCESS OVERVIEW**

The research was conducted through the implementation of six phases, namely literature review, empirical research, reporting of the results, discussion of the results, conclusion, and limitations and recommendations of the research.

### **1.5.1 Phase 1: Literature review**

The focus of the literature review was to provide an in-depth review on the theoretical approaches of the variable of interest of this study. The theoretical framework of the study is explained to provide a clear understanding of the constructs of interest in the study, the way the psychosocial factors identified relate to one another, as well as willingness to deploy. Specific areas of the literature review include:

- the SANDF deployment experience;
- specific challenges of military deployments;
- the human element in military operations;
- social exchange theory;
- leadership behaviour;
- organisational climate;
- trust; and
- willingness to deploy.

### **1.5.2 Phase 2: Empirical research**

Data were gathered by means of existing standardised questionnaires. The questionnaires were pen-and-pencil evaluation tools that were administered to a sample of 206 soldiers from a rank grouping comprising privates, non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and officers. All races and both male and female genders were included. Willingness was measured with the Willingness to Deploy Questionnaire (WDQ) as adapted by Nkewu (2014) from Bester and Stanz's (2007) Peace-Support Operation Questionnaire (PSOQ) subtest. The scale consisted of 12 items. The scale used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Will never volunteer, to 5 = Will always volunteer. The reliability coefficient is .91 (Nkewu, 2014).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Form 6x) was used to measure transactional and transformational leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1992). The questionnaire consisted of 21 items each, using a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Fairly open, and 5 = Frequently. The MLQ has been used by other South African studies, with a reliability coefficient ranging from .87 to .90 (Grundlingh, 2012).

Organisational climate was measured using the Organisational Climate Measure (OCM) (Patterson et al., 2005). The original scale measures 17 dimensions, which are separated into four domains, namely human relations (autonomy, integration, involvement, supervisory support, training, and welfare), internal process (formalisation and tradition), open systems (innovation, flexibility, outward focus, and reflexivity), and rational goal (clarity of organisational goals, efficiency, effort, performance feedback, pressure to produce, and quality). However, for the purposes of this study, only 15 dimensions were measured. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale with response options from 1 = Definitely false, 2 = Mostly false, 3 = Moderate, 4 = Mostly true, to 5 = Definitely true. Researchers who have used the OCM reported alpha coefficients that ranged from .67 to .91 (Patterson et al., 2005; Banda, 2019).

Ferres and Travaglione's (2003) Work Trust Survey (WTS) was utilised to measure the aspect of trust in organisations and the trustworthiness of leaders. The original scale has 36 items that measure three dimensions of trust: firstly, 11 items measuring trust in the organisation; secondly, nine items measuring trust in leaders (personal trust); and lastly, 12 items measuring trust in co-workers. However, for the purposes of this study, trust in co-workers was not measured or considered. The WTS has been used by other South African studies, with a reliability coefficient ranging from .90 to .97 (Van Staden, 2007).

### **1.5.3 Phase 3: Reporting of results**

This section provides a discussion of the various statistical techniques that were used to analyse the data gathered by the questionnaires.



#### **1.5.4 Phase 4: Discussion of results**

This section provides a discussion of empirical research results. The discussion indicates whether the initial hypotheses are supported or rejected, based on the results of the statistical analysis.

#### **1.5.5 Phase 5: Conclusion, limitations and recommendations**

This section focuses on conclusions drawn regarding the hypotheses tested in the study. The limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research, are also discussed in this section.

### **1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION**

The chapters are presented in the following order:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

Chapter 4: Research results

Chapter 5: Discussion of results

Chapter 6: Conclusion, limitations, and recommendations

### **1.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The contextual background and motivation for the study were discussed in this chapter. The chapter further outlined the SANDF's involvement in deployments in Africa and within the borders of South Africa. It is unlikely that soldiers will perform well during deployment if the will to go on a mission is absent. This is especially true with deployments becoming more complex and multidimensional and exposing soldiers to different types of stressors and deployment dynamics. The next chapter presents the literature review, where the main concepts of the study are discussed in detail.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

*“Force creates resistance but great relationships build willingness”*

*– Dr Justin Coulson –*

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a comprehensive theoretical discussion of soldiers' willingness to deploy and the social factors that influence it. Over the years, literature has focused on the impact of leadership (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Wong & Cummings, 2009), organisational climate (Novac & Bratanov, 2014), and trust (Dirks, 1999; Aucamp, 2014) on employee behaviour and attitudes. These studies emphasised that the pivotal role of leadership and organisational climate in building great relationships, positive work attitudes, and behaviour cannot be underestimated. The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on South African soldiers' willingness to deploy. In achieving this objective, this chapter begins by providing an overview of the deployment experience of the SANDF and considers deployment challenges that military personnel face during deployments, and thereafter explores the human element to combat. The chapter provides a comprehensive theoretical discussion of willingness to deploy, leadership, organisational climate, and trust, and how the social exchange theory can be helpful in examining the relationship between the constructs of interest (organisational climate, leadership behaviours, trust, and willingness to deploy).

#### **2.2 THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE (SANDF) DEPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

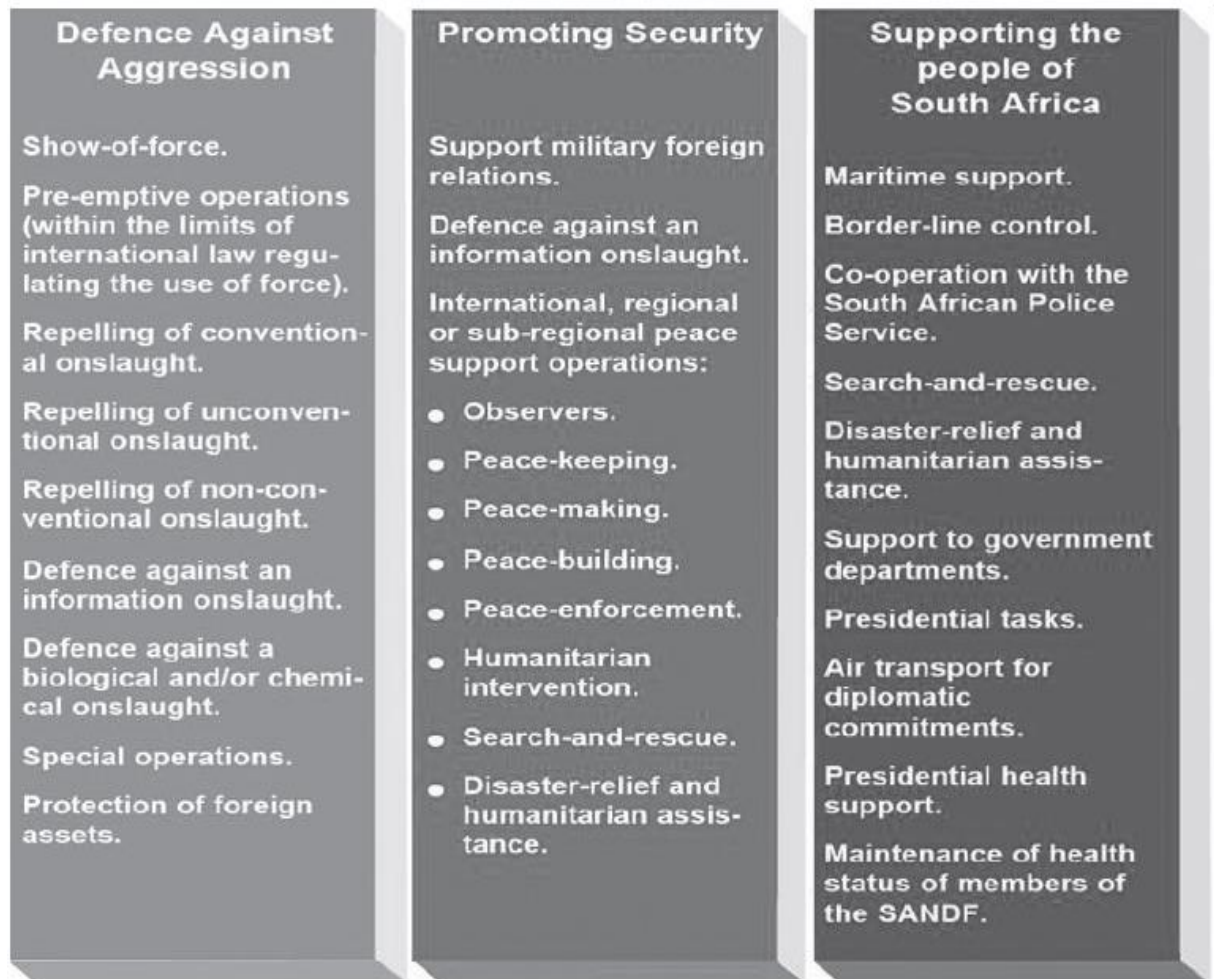
Ling and Johnson (2013) describe military deployments as temporary movements of soldiers for the accomplishment of organisational objectives and missions. Most military deployments are planned, and units are well informed of the rotation dates. Military deployments can take place within or outside the borders of a specific country. Internal deployment refers to the deployment of the SANDF, specifically the SA Army, within the country in order to support any state department, including

support for purposes of socio-economic development, border control, and humanitarian relief (SAN, 2010). Similarly, Heinecken (2019) states that one of the main tasks performed by the SANDF since 1994 has been to protect the state against external attacks and to support the SAPS in its attempt to provide safety and security to the people of South Africa. As mentioned in Chapter 1, without peace and stability, the African continent cannot achieve harmonious and sustainable development. The creation of peace and stability is therefore seen as a crucial task for future developments on the African continent (Mandrup, 2008). South Africa has a long history of participation in peace support operations in Africa. All peace support operations are mandated by Chapter VI of the UN Charter (Mandrup, 2008). This mandate is then delegated in terms of Chapter VI to regional bodies such as the AU and sub-regional bodies such as the SADC (Heinecken & Ferreira, 2012). “Peace support operation” is the umbrella term that describes military involvement in all types of peace support missions, such as peacekeeping, peacebuilding, peacemaking, peace enforcement, and preventative diplomacy (Vrey & Mandrup, 2017).

Firstly, peacebuilding refers to longer-term development and governance strategies aimed at fostering self-sustaining peace and rebuilding infrastructure in order to prevent the reoccurring of destabilisation or conflict. Peacebuilding is important for designing democratic institutions, monitoring elections, and creating reconciliation (De Coning, 2006). Secondly, peacemaking refers to the process of ending conflict through negotiation, mediation, or arbitration (Mandrup, 2008).

Thirdly, preventative diplomacy involves activities that are aimed at preventing disputes between parties, preventing existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and restricting the spread of conflict as they occur (Kenkel, 2013). Fourthly, peacekeeping occurs when conflict has broken out and a third party, such as a regional and sub-regional organisation or the UN, tries to intervene in order to assist in peacekeeping (De Coning, 2006). This is the most common type of peace operations that the SANDF is involved in (Heinecken, 1998). Generally, peacekeeping involves the use of minimum military force to maintain existing agreements between opposing forces (Mandrup, 2008).

Lastly, peace enforcement refers to the use of force in order to attain compliance with peace resolutions (Bester & Stanz, 2007). The mandate of the soldiers in these peace support missions is basically to protect civilians against any form of harm and self-sacrifice. SANDF missions are summarised in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Major missions of the SANDF**

(Mandrup, 2008, p. 8)

Although the SANDF normally deploys for peacekeeping operations, Mandrup (2008) states that South Africa is in principle willing to participate in all kinds of peace support missions, including peace enforcement and humanitarian assistance, as shown in Figure 2.1. However, the deployment to the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013 proved that soldiers should be prepared for any type of mission as soldiers' mindset plays an important role in mission success. This became a reality when South African soldiers, most of whom were from the SA Army, were ambushed by well-armed rebel forces in the CAR, which resulted in the death of 15 South

African soldiers (Mpofu & Van Dyk, 2016). The nature of this deployment was unique as soldiers were not deployed under the normal peace support mission mandate and there were uncertainties regarding the execution of the mission. The mission was as a result of an agreement between the political authorities of the CAR and the South African government. SANDF members were deployed to provide military training to the CAR Army (Heitman, 2013).

According to Bester and Du Plessis (2014), the ambush that occurred in the CAR placed improbable pressure on South African soldiers who were deployed there, especially military leaders. South African soldiers did not have enough equipment or personnel (Heitman, 2013). The incident sent a message to the African leaders and the South African government that soldiers who are deployed in peacekeeping missions face life-threatening situations and risk being killed, regardless of the nature of the deployment. The ambush proved that the environment in which these military operations are conducted is increasingly becoming complex in nature and it further emphasised that the SANDF should be combat ready for any type of peace support mission (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009). It also emphasised the interdependent nature of military deployments. This demonstrates why the SANDF needs soldiers who have high levels of willingness to deploy. This is because soldiers who are willing to deploy will be mentally better prepared for any situation that may arise during deployment.

According to Bester and Du Plessis (2014) the complexity of military operations requires military leaders who will be able to adjust and adapt to rapidly changing situations. Bester and Du Plessis (2014) further suggest that adaptive leaders are those who are able to function and make ethical decisions in dangerous situations. Moreover, these military leaders, as well as their subordinates, should perform effectively as individuals and as members of the unit in order for the SANDF to succeed (Shinga, 2015). Sweeney (2010) postulates that cohesion and confidence of the soldiers in themselves and in their leaders are important for combat effectiveness. In addition, the highly interdependent and the dynamic nature of deployments requires effective leadership and trust from both military leaders and subordinates to perform successfully (Lee, Bond, & Russel, 2010).

There is no doubt that the leadership style within the military context is usually determined by the dynamics of the situation or mission, which include the degree of uncertainty, danger, group climate, and frustrations of subordinate soldiers. In support, Kalamdien and Van Dyk (2009) state that factors such as ambiguity, danger, physical exertion, and friction constitute the climate of military operations, which contributes to the complexity of deployments with which military leaders must contend in future operations. Adler, Litz, and Bartone (2003) therefore advocate that military leaders and subordinates must collaborate, trust, and share a common goal and vision to fight more effectively. This will give them the advantage of reducing uncertainty while increasing situational awareness.

The importance of having soldiers who are willing to deploy cannot be underestimated because it contributes to combat readiness. Mandrup (2008) argues that South African soldiers played a huge role in ending the ethnic conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi. Furthermore, South Africa's contribution of troops to peace support operations is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest in the world (Schoeman, 2010). According to Mandrup (2008), more than 3 000 soldiers were deployed externally in the year 2004 and an average of 1 765 soldiers were deployed internally in 2006 in support of the police to tackle the crime pandemic. In 2010, the SANDF participated in four peacekeeping missions in the DRC, Burundi, Sudan, and Uganda (Heinecken, 2019). This indicates the great need for the SANDF to have a large number of soldiers to deploy and further confirms the significant role that the SANDF plays in conflict resolutions in Africa.

The ability of a force to perform and succeed in its mission lies in its human capital (military personnel). This is because weapons cannot operate themselves without a soldier behind them. What is clear is that the military must be combat ready for any type of peace support operation. Gal (1986) describes combat readiness as a psychological attribute in terms of a soldier's choice or degree of commitment to, and persistence in, effecting a certain course of action. This description of combat readiness implies that there must be willingness from the individual soldier to participate in combat.

Building knowledge on the combat readiness construct from Gal's (1986) notion of combat readiness, Bester and Stanz (2007) developed a measurement for combat readiness and found that the concept includes two factors, namely the psychosocial (individual psychological attributes) and material (equipment needed for military operations) dimensions. Moreover, they suggest that willingness to deploy forms part of combat readiness.

Akin to the two dimensions that were suggested by the previous authors, Shinga (2015) further elaborates on this construct by examining the factors involved in combat readiness and indicates that three factors contribute to combat readiness. These include, firstly, personnel readiness such as intra-psychic and self-confidence; secondly, material readiness such as the serviceability of equipment; and lastly, unit readiness such as morale and teamwork. This study aims to contribute to the personnel preparedness of soldiers by investigating psychosocial factors that could contribute to soldiers' willingness to deploy.

### **2.2.1 Specific challenges of military deployments**

To understand the significance of soldiers' willingness to deploy, it is imperative to begin by getting a clear picture of what challenges soldiers are confronted with during deployment. Admittedly, military deployments are complex, unpredictable, stressful, and often dangerous. Military deployments can mean separation from loved ones and exposure to innate deployment stressors. Previously, internal and external deployments were three months and six months respectively and it was straining; currently, it has escalated to six and 12 months respectively (Matjeke, 2016). This implies that the situation may be aggravated by more physical and psychological demands (Heinecken & Ferreira, 2012; Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005).

According to Kalamdien and Van Dyk (2009), deployment challenges include stressors such as lack of sleep, exhaustion, feelings of isolation, extreme weather conditions, being separated from loved ones, and soldiers' attitude towards the mission. These stressors may affect how soldiers behave, as well as their ability to perform their duties optimally. Bruwer and Van Dyk (2005) claim that work-related stressors, such as length of deployment or exposure to adverse living conditions and family problems, may exacerbate the effects of traumatic stress and may have a



negative impact on the wellbeing of soldiers. Furthermore, they may be overwhelmed with feelings of helplessness about reducing civilians' suffering and improving their safety and security. The long periods of absence from home have the potential to cause marital problems and other forms of family instability. Consequently, some soldiers may be unwilling to deploy in future deployments as they would perceive the military as a factor that restricts their families from functioning well (Kgosana, 2010).

Military deployments require adjusting to a psychologically and physically taxing environment (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009), while soldiers are expected to operate effectively. The African continent is known for its diverse set of conflict drivers such as tribal, religious, ethnic, and post-colonial political struggles. Peacekeepers may also be confronted with adjustment issues because of differences in culture, values, language, religion, and food in the countries they deploy to (Bester & Du Plessis, 2014). Mashishi (2013) believes that the success or failure of peacekeeping operations is mainly determined by the relationship between peacekeepers and the local population, and this relationship can be influenced by factors such as the attitudes and behaviours of the peacekeepers.

This implies that if peacekeepers do not have a positive attitude about being deployed, they will not be willing to form healthy relationships with the local population. Understanding the diversity of the deployment environment can enhance soldiers' ability to perform and cope during peace support operations. Moreover, the inability and failure to understand and tolerate different cultural and religious groups might result in maladjustment (Donais, 2012). For example, in Sudan, the majority of the population follow the Islam religion. Soldiers who are deployed in these areas will therefore have to take note of Islamic cultural beliefs and societal expectations such as the fact that alcohol is forbidden in Muslim countries. In addition, women and men do not have the same status and it would be difficult, if not impossible, for a female commander to negotiate with Islamic leaders (Grobler & Robertson, 2012). McInnis (2015) agrees that it is important that peacekeepers demonstrate extraordinary carefulness, self-control, and understanding towards other cultures, so that their behaviours do not have a chance of reflecting a poor image of peace support missions.



Ecologically, peacekeepers are exposed to different environmental factors such as extreme temperatures, which may affect their morale and performance (Radebe, 2009). Moreover, peacekeepers are at a higher risk of exposure to potentially traumatic events. According to Malantowicz (2013), soldiers may witness people being killed or injured, which could be traumatic to them, and they may feel helpless for not being able to stop violent situations during military deployment.

As such, this makes them a risk group that is vulnerable to suffering from psychological distress and mental health problems, including depression, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); all of which pose a potential threat to their wellbeing (Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005). Moreover, financial constraints in the organisation present challenges for SANDF soldiers in the sense of having to do more work with limited resources. In his media address, the SA Army Chief, Lieutenant General Yam, stressed that the SANDF is struggling to face all of South Africa's security threats given its shrinking defence budget (Defence Web, 2019).

Some of these challenges that were discussed above may lead soldiers to engage in misconduct, such as drug and alcohol abuse, to cope. This may result in soldiers who are involved in misconduct to be sent home, which paints a poor image of the SANDF. One could assume that misconduct by subordinates could be attributed to the use of coercive power for soldiers to deploy; meaning forcing subordinates to deploy. Subordinates may retaliate by engaging in negative behaviours such as being absent from work. According to Erdtmann (2014), there are three main reasons for soldiers to be sent back early from deployment. To begin with, they can be sent back early for legal reasons, which concern issues with disciplinary problems such as being absent without leave. Next, the psychological reasons include the diagnosis of mental illnesses such as PTSD or suicidal behaviour. Finally, social problems can include familial adjustment problems.

Against this background, one can deduce that deployment challenges could possibly affect the ability of peacekeepers to execute their tasks. Moreover, these challenges may manifest especially when the subordinate soldier lacked the will to deploy from the onset and they may be unable to cope with these challenges. Understanding the dynamic nature of deployments is necessary to ensure that the SANDF deploys soldiers who have the drive or will to deploy.

### **2.2.2 The human element in military operations**

The military relies heavily on its personnel to operate effectively and professionally. The military regards its employees as an important element in the organisation, and it is through their involvement, commitment, and dedication that the military can achieve its objectives (Sempane, Rieger, & Roodt, 2002). In concurrence with this view, Thompson and McCreary (2006) acknowledge that soldiers remain the critical resources during deployments or any military operation and they are expected to have emotional, behavioural, and cognitive control to ensure operational effectiveness and the safety of themselves and civilians. According to Griffith (2002), the human element in combat refers to group morale, cohesion, and motivation. Throughout the history of combat research, military theorists such as Sun Tzu were aware of the important role that morale and unit cohesion play in combat success (Siebold, 2007). Sudom, Dursun, and Flemming (as cited in Shinga, 2015) describe cohesion as a bond of trust between team members that sustain their will and commitment to the mission, their unit, and one another.

Siebold (2007) suggests that four types of cohesion exist, namely vertical, horizontal, organisational, and institutional cohesion. Vertical cohesion refers to a leader-follower relationship that is built on trust, while horizontal cohesion refers to bonding between peers (Griffith, 2002; Shinga, 2015). Organisational cohesion refers to the bonding between soldiers at the next higher level, such as battalion level (unit level). Institutional cohesion refers to the bond between members of the same arms of service, for instance SA Army members will have their own bond. Vertical and horizontal cohesion refer to primary group cohesion, while organisational and institutional cohesion refer to secondary group cohesion (Siebold, 2007). All four these types of cohesion refer to the social relationship soldiers have with one another, their leader, and the unit. Each type of cohesion has affective and instrumental aspects. The affective aspect is characterised by caring, trusting, and being supportive of one another, while the instrumental aspect is characterised by tangible assistance such as physical assistance and cooperation to complete the task (Kgosana, 2010). The essence of strong group cohesion has been found to be associated with trust among members, coupled with teamwork. Through the social exchange relationship, trust develops between group members.

Primary group cohesion is associated with performance, while secondary group cohesion is related to employees' intention to remain in the organisation (Griffith, 2002). Cohesion is important for the military because of the interdependent nature of deployments (Shinga, 2015). According to Garrido and Muñoz (2006), cohesion moderates the effects of stress on performance such that groups are more cohesive and able to function well even under considerable stress. How well military personnel adjust to the psychological stressors of deployments is of critical importance both to mission success and to individual health and wellbeing. This means that high morale shields soldiers from the development of battle stress during military operations, increases their level of performance, and reduces the risk of PTSD symptoms.

Griffith (2006) found that a positive social climate contributes to unit cohesion. Social climate is a resource that has been found to have a beneficial impact on reducing psychological strain. A positive social climate includes factors such as trust and leadership support. Greater vertical cohesion has been found to mitigate the negative effects of combat stressors by providing soldiers with social support and acceptance (Griffith, 2002). This cohesion can only be built through trust. Furthermore, Griffith (2006) found that unit cohesion is associated with higher morale and motivation.

Tucker, Sinclair, and Thomas (2005) compared morale to commitment, dedication, and willingness to participate in an event, in that it concerns the individual's state of mind. To elaborate further, morale involves individual preparedness to perform duties. Garrido and Muñoz (2006) state that the military uses morale and motivation interchangeably. However, morale highlights the condition of the unit or group (platoon), while motivation describes an attribute of an individual. According to Jelusic (2004), soldiers' "will to fight" can be explained by concepts such as morale, cohesion, and motivation, which guide soldiers' actions and behaviour during deployments. This implies that willingness to deploy can be explained by concepts such as morale and motivation.

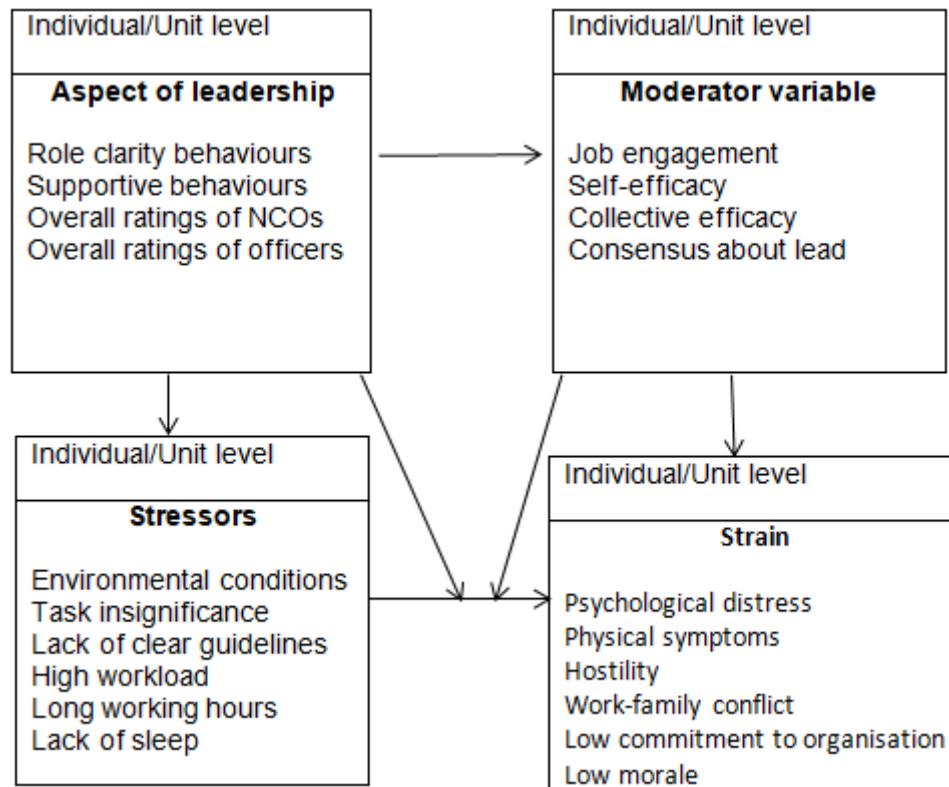
According to Thompson and Gignac (2001), pre-deployment factors such as level of motivation, perception of preparedness, and risk have a direct influence on a soldier's adjustment process during deployment. As previously mentioned, military deployments are challenging and stressful. Griffin and Moorhead (2014, p. 181)

define stress as “a person’s adaptive response to a stimulus that places excessive psychological or physical demands on him or her”. Much research focusing on stress has sought to understand the differences in how people cope with stress and how this affects their wellbeing (Dobрева-Martinova, 1999; Pesic, 2018; Parmak, 2018). People appraise events in terms of whether they perceive it to be challenging, threatening, harmful, or present a loss (Thompson & Gignac, 2001). The authors further suggest that these appraisals serve as determinants of how people react to stress and that will determine their coping efforts. Coping refers to a person’s ability to use available resources to meet the demands of a stressful event (Dobрева-Martinova, 1999). It is imperative that soldiers can cope with stress, as stress has an indirect effect on deployment success and security (Adler et al., 2003).

Bandura (as cited in Thompson & Gignac, 2001) found that people who held positive expectations and were willing to participate in an upcoming event were likely to use adaptive coping strategies in dealing with the event. These adaptive coping strategies can provide soldiers with the ability to be flexible towards the accomplishment of military operation objectives. Along the same lines, Parmak (2018) found that the impact of situational stressors on the individual’s wellbeing is related to the person’s appraisal of the stressful situation. This means that if a person views the challenging event as an opportunity or in a positive manner, they would be less likely to be affected by stress. Moreover, soldiers who have higher levels of morale and have supportive leaders are not immune to the effects of adverse events; they rather accept reality, have strong values and beliefs, and possess adaptive coping mechanisms that allow them to adapt to unforeseen circumstances or dangerous situations.

Dobрева-Martinova (1999) reports that positive leadership styles are related to higher levels of morale and cohesion before, during, and after deployment. Hamid, Uli, Johari, Osman, and Wen (2018) found that the use of both transformational and transactional leadership has a positive effect on soldiers’ morale. Effective leadership is important especially in dangerous situations and with uncertainties that often arise during deployment, and building vertical cohesion is one of the important aspects of leadership. Shinga (2015) confirms that effective leadership elevates cohesion and morale. Morale and cohesion have been found to be related to group performance in various settings across numerous studies. Britt, Davison, Bliese, and Castro (2004)

suggest that aspects of leadership behaviour have an influence on the impact that stressors have on soldiers. Figure 2.2 depicts how leadership in the military can reduce the effect that stressors have on soldiers' wellbeing.



**Figure 2.2: Influence of leader behaviour on soldiers' wellbeing**

(Britt et al., 2004, p. 542)

As illustrated in Figure 2.2, leaders can influence the relationship between stressors and soldiers' wellbeing (indicated as strain in Figure 2.2) in three ways. To begin with, leadership aspects can directly influence stressors that may be experienced by soldiers, such as high workload and long working hours. Next, effective and supportive leaders can act as buffers against stressors and strains (outcome of stress) that soldiers experience such as psychological distress and low morale. This can be done by clarifying role behaviours and supporting employees. Finally, leaders and individual features such as self-efficacy can moderate the relationship between stressors and strain by reducing the effects of stressors on soldiers. Against this background, it is clear that military leaders play an important role in influencing soldiers' wellbeing before and during deployment.

There is no doubt that the human elements to military operations (cohesion, morale, and motivation) are important for coping with deployment challenges (see Section 2.2.1). It can be concluded that deployment is never easy, but when soldiers are willing to deploy and are exposed to effective leadership behaviour and positive attitudes, the level of deployment stress and anxiety may decrease. As with any life-changing event, the more prepared and willing soldiers are to deploy, the easier it might be to cope with the change and deal with the stressors they are faced with. This can be achieved through intensive force preparation before deployment, building trust between leaders and followers, and maintaining a healthy organisational climate.

### **2.3 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY**

Social exchange theory provides a theoretical basis for understanding employee interactions and forming positive work attitudes (Blau, 1964; Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2004). Specifically, in organisational research, social exchange theory has been used to describe the motivational basis behind employee attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.

The social exchange theory, developed by sociologist George Homans (1958), suggests that people seek to form and maintain relationships in which the benefits outweigh the costs. In other words, people evaluate their relationships by analysing the benefits of the exchange relationship to determine their relationship commitment. The basic assumption of social exchange theory is that certain antecedents in the workplace generate reciprocal relationships. Employees are more likely to seek out relationships if doing so will be rewarding; the investment they make in the relationship is directly proportional to the reward they might receive (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2004). Social exchange relationships are centred on individuals (followers) who trust that the other parties (leaders) to the reciprocal relationship will fairly discharge their obligation in the long run (DeConinck, 2010).

After Homans developed the theory, Peter Blau continued to write about it. According to Blau (1964), the exchange relationship between the two parties goes beyond pure economic exchange and entails social exchange. It is characterised by indeterminate personal obligations and trust, as well as both intrinsic and extrinsic

rewards. For example, most people value acceptance, loyalty, financial support, affection, and companionship, and they might therefore find it rewarding to be in a relationship with a person who enhances their social status; this is classified as a reward (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002).

Cropanzano, Prehar, and Chen (2002) believe that when managers and employees create a good working relationship, a reciprocal relationship is formed that will not only benefit the employee, but will also benefit the organisation. As social relationships develop, a sense of trust between the parties emerges, along with the enhancement of mutual reciprocity. Employees who benefit from their supervisors therefore feel obligated to reciprocate the favour by engaging in positive behaviours; this is a way of repaying the organisation (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). As previously mentioned, both the individual and the organisation benefit from this relationship. The benefits for the employees could include high employee morale, high levels of job satisfaction, and low levels of work stress (Cropanzano et al., 2002). The benefits for the organisation include low turnover, high levels of employee commitment, and employees who are effective in their jobs, which all increase productivity (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002; Cropanzano et al., 2002).

The social exchange theory captures the importance of maintaining positive psychosocial factors in the workplace, such as leadership and organisational climate (DeConinck, 2010). When people feel that the work environment is hostile, it discourages them to seek and maintain relationships in the workplace (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). According to Kelliher and Anderson (2010), employees often characterise the organisation as having human-like attributes and thus expect the organisation to show support and appreciation. Trust and fairness are crucial factors in social exchange relationships (DeConinck, 2010). When subordinates perceive their leader as trustworthy and the work climate as conducive, they may be more likely to reciprocate to the organisation with increased work effort and favourable work attitudes (Cropanzano et al., 2002). It is reasonable to assume that within the military context, soldiers will be willing to deploy if they perceive that their immediate commander is trustworthy and that the work climate is conducive and supportive.



Social exchange explains why followers become obligated to their leader and contribute in ways that transcend the requirements of the formal employment contract (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Because the social exchange theory focuses on the exchange relationship between parties, it is especially useful for explaining factors that may influence soldiers' willingness to deploy.

This study argues that based on the norm of the reciprocity in social exchange relationships, soldiers will develop high levels of trust if they perceive that the leadership and organisational climate that exist in their units are positive, and subsequently they will be more likely to repay the military organisation with positive attitudes and behaviours (DeConinck, 2010). In this case, they will be willing to deploy even if death is a possibility.

## **2.4 WILLINGNESS TO DEPLOY**

Despite the vast research on peacekeeping, resolutions for conflicts, and combat readiness, measuring soldiers' willingness to deploy remains elusive. The military is mission orientated in nature and it requires the deployment of soldiers for peacekeeping operations (Shinga, 2015). Literature provides limited research on willingness to deploy. Willingness to deploy can be attributed to various factors. This study focused on psychosocial factors, namely leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust. Research indicated that these factors have been shown to enhance unit cohesion (Shinga, 2015), employee morale (Gal, 1986), and employee wellbeing (Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005).

Bester and Stanz (2007) were the first authors to conceptualise willingness to deploy, and Nkewu (2014) continued to explore the concept by investigating the impact of psychological wellbeing and perceived combat readiness on willingness to deploy in the SANDF. He argued that external deployment is voluntary and depends on soldiers who are willing to deploy and on their level of combat readiness, specifically for external deployments. Kellett (2013) postulates that modern combat practice encourages the willing participation of soldiers but they are aware that military authorities have ways of ensuring apparent compliance. The question facing the organisation is whether soldiers will execute their deployment tasks with ardour if they are forced to deploy.



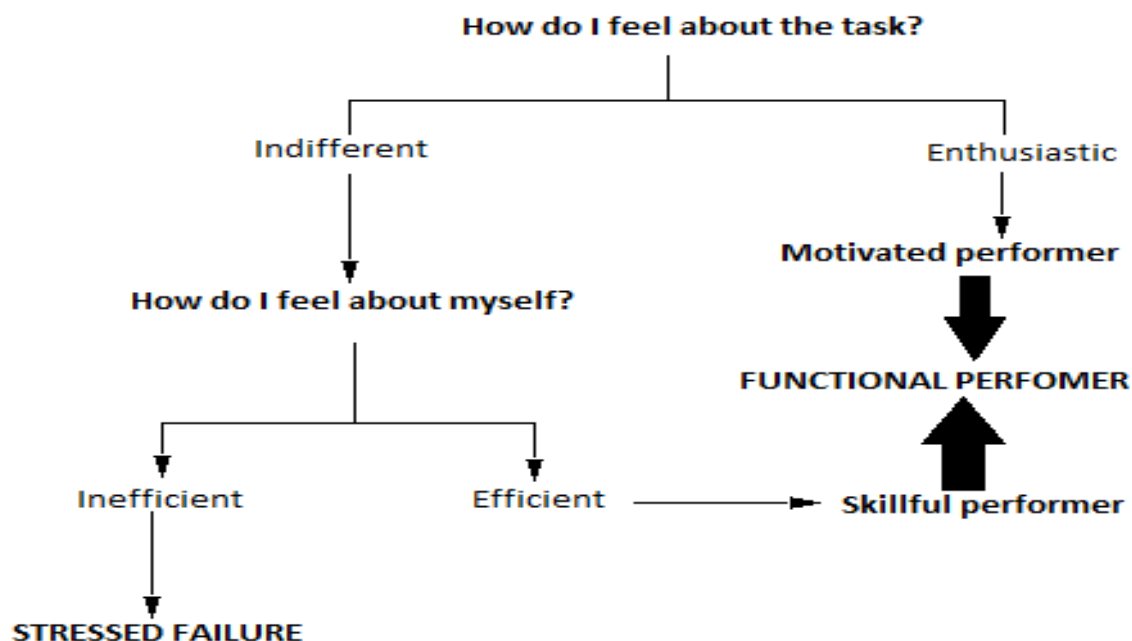
Every organisation needs employees who are willing to perform their duties with enthusiasm and determination and who go beyond their normal duties (Nkewu, 2014). It is important to first establish what is meant by willingness. The term “willingness” is usually associated with a state of being prepared to do something (*Oxford English Dictionary Online*, 2018). Military deployment refers to the assignment of soldiers to various locations (Kalamdien & Van Dyk, 2009). Bester and Stanz (2007) describe willingness to deploy as a psychological state of preparedness by a soldier to voluntarily make him or herself available for deployments, even if death is a possibility. Nkewu (2014) compares willingness to deploy to commitment to the military organisation. Commitment is defined as an “internal psychological state of mind an individual has toward an object” (Heere & Dickson, 2008, p. 230). Moreover, the authors describe personal commitment as an individual’s dedication to achieve a line of action. According to Heinecken (1997), the most desirable qualities in soldiers are commitment, patriotism, and loyalty towards the military organisation.

For the purposes of this study, willingness to deploy encompasses all the definitions given above. Willingness to deploy therefore refers to a psychological state of preparedness and commitment by a soldier to make him or herself available for deployment, even if death is possible. The meaning of the term “willingness to deploy” therefore resides more around soldiers’ positive mindset and attitude towards deployment, commitment to achieve a line of action, and preparedness to avail themselves for military deployments even if death is possible. This argument is based on Franke and Heinecken’s (2001) claim that attitudes shape behaviours. Williams (2003) stresses the importance of the strength of mind and attitude, because our behaviours are guided by our thoughts and feelings. This study therefore argues that psychosocial factors can influence soldiers’ willingness to deploy.

The military requires total commitment to one’s unit and mission to build unit cohesion and win wars (Griffith, 2006). Given the definition that this study adopted, this implies that soldiers should be willing to carry out their military duties even at the risk of their lives, if they have trust towards the leader and organisation and organisational climate as well as leadership behaviours are positive. In support of this view, Matjeke (2016) maintains that the SANDF requires soldiers who are willing

and committed to carry out their mission at a satisfactory level. Deductively, the benefits of deploying soldiers who are willing to deploy are the creation of goodwill among soldiers towards the military and to ensure good staffing of deployed soldiers who will exert more effort in fulfilling the mission. In addition, it can be deduced that soldiers who are willing to deploy will be able to overcome challenges or stress they might encounter during deployments because of their positive mindset.

Bester and Stanz (2007) state that combat readiness does not only concern training and material readiness but also includes a human element. In addition, Parmak (2018) suggests that two important factors for performance are the capabilities to complete the task and the willingness to complete the task. Although most people believe that ability is the only determinant of effective performance because one cannot complete a task without having the necessary skills or abilities, the willingness factor is just as important. Willingness is seen as the driver of performance. Figure 2.3 illustrates the interdependent relationship of the willingness factor and the capability factor.



**Figure 2.3: Two-step cognitive appraisal model adapted to military performance**

(Parmak, 2018, p. 53)

As demonstrated in Figure 2.3, the two-step cognitive model of military performance demonstrates how people differ in performance based on their appraisal of events. The primary appraisal of an event refers to how a person feels about a particular

task. For example, is a person enthusiastic and willing to deploy or are they stressed or feel indifferent about it? When a person is enthusiastic about the task, he or she will be a motivated performer. Next, secondary appraisal concerns the person's feelings about their skills or capabilities and their physical preparation to cope with the upcoming event. If the person believes that they have the skills to cope with the demands of the situation, they will be a skilful performer. The combination of a skilful performer and a motivated performer makes a functional performer (Parmak, 2018). This is what the SANDF requires from its members: a functional performer. Similarly, Ananthan, Inderjit, and Kwong (2015) believe that the success of military operations depends on how well soldiers are trained and on their willingness to perform the task (motivational level).

A soldier therefore needs to exhibit both willingness to deploy and physical abilities to be effective in deployment. In support of this argument, Chen and Silverthorne (2005) found a positive relationship between willingness to perform and performance. The two-step cognitive appraisal model is useful in explaining the need to have the willingness factor as a prerequisite for soldiers to deploy. Most studies on military deployments have focused on the importance of the capability factor for mission success (Bester & Stanz, 2007; Shinga, 2015), while neglecting the willingness factor. Willingness to deploy serves as the drive for performance and it will help soldiers to cope with the deployment challenges that were discussed in Section 2.1.

South African soldiers are volunteers; they are therefore not expected to place emphasis on pay compared to their counterparts in civilian organisations (Heinecken, 1997). However, Battistelli (1997) found that the factors that motivate soldiers to deploy are material rewards and self-fulfilment, such as a sense of adventure. Furthermore, Wilén and Heinecken (2017) investigated the influence of participating in peace support missions on career progression. They interviewed 50 South African soldiers and found that higher-rank members valued the experience they acquired during deployment, whereas lower-rank members believed that deployments have a negative effect on their career progression. To broaden our understanding of this phenomenon of willingness to deploy, Jelusic (2004) investigated what motivated Slovenian soldiers to participate in peace support operations but used the term “will to fight” in his study.

He found that risky and longer military operations attracted older soldiers with experience, while shorter deployments characterised by low intensity attracted younger soldiers. Similar to Battistelli's (1997) findings, he found that motivating factors for Slovenian soldiers to participate in peace support missions are to strengthen the country's image, economic reward, and to gain meaningful personal experience. In addition, Heinecken and Ferreira (2012) emphasise that military deployments create opportunities for soldiers to gain experience and to acquire new skills. Moreover, soldiers gain a sense of purpose by contributing to the nation. This is because soldiers, just like employees of a civilian organisation, desire to be part of something significant such as contributing to peace support missions. While the abovementioned factors contribute to soldiers' decision to deploy, this study explores different factors that enhance willingness to deploy. This is important because it provides insight into the holistic understanding of what factors motivate soldiers' willingness to deploy. Richardson (as cited in Bester & Stanz, 2007) argues that the most important factor in war is the behaviour of the soldier, in that it is not about the number of soldiers in the battle but the will to win the battle. The important role that leaders play in determining employee attitudes and behaviour cannot be overemphasised. It is the responsibility of military leaders to ensure that the soldiers they lead are motivated and can perform effectively.

According to Gal (1986), the factors that contribute to soldiers' will to fight are leadership and self-preservation. This is because a soldier develops a sense of reciprocal obligation to fight for their own force and unit. Willingness to deploy is critical in the attainment of a mentally healthy and fit force with high morale, which subsequently leads to high performance. Willingness to deploy indicates the individual's readiness to take on any challenge that comes with deployment. It is reasonable to expect soldiers with willingness to deploy to possess attitudes that will be helpful in turning stressful circumstances from military deployments into growth opportunities. Nkewu (2014) found a positive relationship between confidence in leaders, psychological wellbeing, and willingness to deploy. The study used the WDQ adapted by Nkewu (2014) from Bester and Stanz's (2007) PSOQ subtest. The WDQ is relevant for this study as it was developed for the SANDF population.

## 2.5 ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

Organisational climate is a noteworthy psychosocial factor in the workplace. At an individual level, climate is known as psychological climate, and at group or unit level it is known as organisational climate. The former refers to the perceptions of a single employee and their subjective appraisal of their work environment. The latter refers to aggregated and shared perceptions of employees of an organisation (Bann et al., 2011). Each organisation has a unique climate that provides employees with similar expectations and influences their behaviour and work attitudes. Organisational climate is a significant construct in understanding employee behaviour in organisations (Suifan, 2016; Makhathini & Van Dyk, 2018).

According to Stringer (2002), organisational climate is regarded as an objectively measurable expression of employees' perceptions of their work environment, while Koys and DeCotiis (1991) view it as a descriptive factor that reflects perceptual agreement about organisational practices. Although individuals may differ in the way they evaluate and interpret information, the climate present in the organisation is a collective view of the employees. In short, organisational climate deals with the ways employees attempt to make sense of their environment. Over the years there have been different views on the development of organisational climate. Some scholars attempted to explain the etiology of organisational climate by utilising four approaches (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Castro & Martins, 2010; Hashemi & Sadeqi, 2016).

Firstly, *the structural approach* views organisational climate as the objective appearance of the organisational. According to this view, organisational climate is a result of the common perceptions that employees have as a result of being exposed to the same organisational practices and structure (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Castro & Martins, 2010). Critics of the structural approach argue that it fails to take into account subjective reactions (Hashemi & Sadeqi, 2016) and it does not provide the reason for employees from the same organisation having different perceptions regarding the climate of that particular organisation (Lynn & Ratcliff, 2018).

Secondly, *the perceptual approach* views climate in two ways. The first view suggests that people are influenced by their perceptions. The second view is classified by grouping individuals based on their agreement on how they view their

work environment (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Castro & Martins, 2010). The main problem with the perceptual approach is that it places the foundation of climate in individuals. This vitiates the possibility of a true composition theory, but more importantly, it implicitly assumes that meaning is something that individuals bring to and impose on organisational processes and events (Lynn & Ratcliff, 2018).

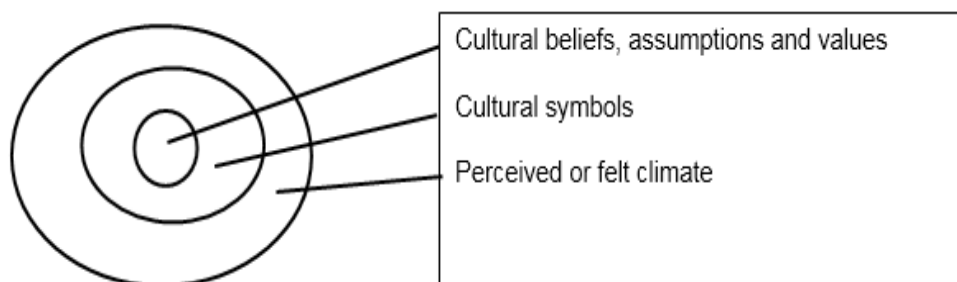
Thirdly, the *interactive approach* assumes that organisational climate is the result of the interaction of individuals in response to their situation, which results in organisational members' shared agreement (Moran & Volkwein, 1992). This approach is grounded in the social exchange theory as it acknowledges the importance of reciprocal relationships. Critics of this approach argue that it does not consider how organisational culture can influence how employees interact with one another in the workplace (Lynn & Ratcliff, 2018). For example, the military's emphasis on adhering to the chain of command may limit the interaction of high-ranking members with lower-ranking members. Lastly, the *cultural approach* considers organisational climate as the result of the interaction of employees who are exposed to the same organisational culture or similar environmental situations (Moran & Volkwein, 1992). The cultural approach emphasises the social arrangements in which cultural features become meaningful. The disadvantage of this approach is the need to explain the relationship between organisational culture and climate (Hashemi & Sadeqi, 2016).

According to Kellett (2013), a good work environment fosters employee motivation, morale, and discipline, and these factors are important for building relationships both in peacetime and in battle. Küpers and Nolan (2009) postulate that relationships are governed by cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses that occur when people interact. To begin with, cognitive processes concern the individual thoughts of each party to the relationship. This reflects how one interprets the behaviour and stability of the relationship. Next, affective processes concern the emotional reactions to others and these may be positive, such as trust, commitment, and loyalty, or negative, like anger, jealousy, or hostility. Finally, behavioural processes are the action components of relationships and include cooperation, sharing of information, ethical conduct, and the sharing of activities. Negative behaviours can include concealment, manipulation, conflict, and unethical conduct. Maintaining positive relationships in the workplace therefore requires fostering a positive climate in the

organisation. A positive climate in the workplace is associated with job satisfaction, commitment, reducing stress levels, and reduced turnover intentions. The climate of an organisation can be cultivated by developing integral organisational and leadership practice. The development of organisational climate, which was discussed above, provides details on how the structure of the organisation, the interaction among members, and the organisational culture influence employees' perceptions of organisational climate. However, it is important for organisations to be able to distinguish between organisational culture and organisational climate.

### 2.5.1 Organisational culture and its relation to organisational climate

Organisational climate and organisational culture are different but interdependent concepts. The former refers to employees' perceptions regarding their work environment, while the latter refers to the shared beliefs, assumptions, and values of employees within a specific organisation (Werner, 2016). Organisational culture helps employees to distinguish between their organisation and other organisations. The most basic level of culture is known as artefacts or symbols. These include rituals, ceremonies, and stories. For instance, rank is rigid in the military culture, and subordinates are expected to salute and pay compliments to their superiors (Cole, 2014). The deeper level concerns values that give employees direction on how they should behave in terms of what is acceptable and unacceptable. The military culture emphasises values, professionalism, self-sacrifice, and discipline; to mention a few (Radebe, 2009). Moreover, employees' perceptions and thinking are guided by their assumptions, which are deeper-rooted beliefs that employees hold. Figure 2.4 provides an illustration of the relationship between organisational culture and organisational climate.

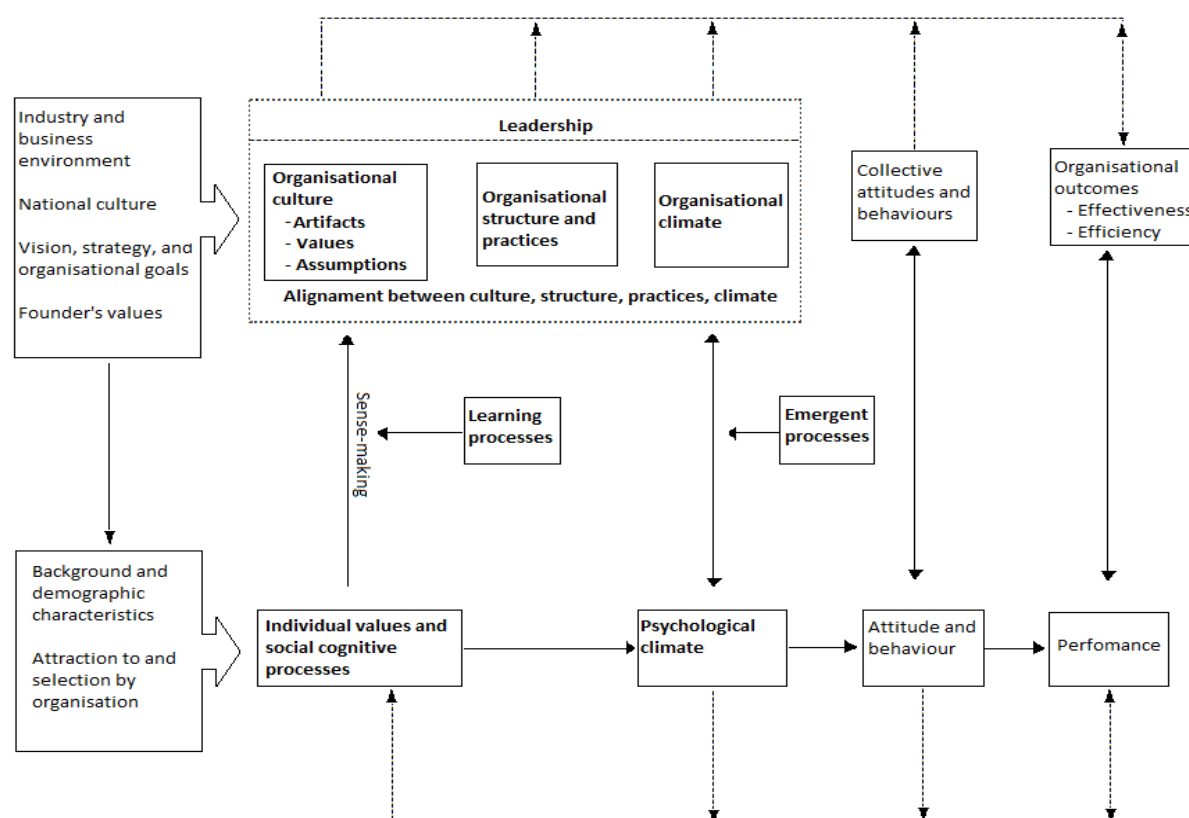


**Figure 2.4: Relationship between organisational culture and organisational climate**

(Van Hoek, 2015, p. 235)



As demonstrated in Figure 2.4, organisational climate is the measurable expression of the culture of the organisation. The culture of an organisation can influence the thinking and behaviour of the employees, depending on the strength of the organisational culture. The values, beliefs, symbols, and assumptions within the organisation or unit create either a negative or positive climate in which the organisation operates (Van Hoek, 2015). Figure 2.5 highlights the important role of culture and leadership in understanding the relationship between organisational climate and employee performance (Ostroff, Kinicki, & Muhammad, 2012).



**Figure 2.5: Multilevel model of organisational culture and climate**

(Ostroff et al., 2012, p. 645)

As shown in Figure 2.5, the organisation's business environment, vision, strategy, organisational goals, the founder's values, and natural culture inform the culture of the organisation. The military has its own set of core values that soldiers are expected to live by. From the first day that new recruits enter the military, these values are taught and enforced on a daily basis. Although each arm of service's core values may vary slightly, their purposes are the same, namely to establish standards of expectations, conduct, and governance over soldiers' life (Radebe, 2009).



Figure 2.5 further highlights the important role of leadership in shaping and facilitating the culture and climate of the organisation. Ananthan et al. (2015) suggest that the officer who commands each unit is responsible for the climate that exists in his or her unit. A positive organisational climate is important to building a disciplined workforce that is capable of accomplishing assigned tasks willingly. Suifan (2016) corroborates this view by suggesting that it is important that leaders monitor the climate of their work environment because a good work climate has been shown to lead to positive organisational outcomes and employee attitudes. Organisational climate depends on organisational culture; employees are therefore unlikely to frequently change their perceptions of their work environment unless some aspect of the culture of the organisation changes.

Longo (2012) argues that compared to organisational culture, organisational climate has a greater influence on employee behaviours and attitudes since climate is perceived differently by each employee. Figure 2.5 further illustrates how individual background characteristics and individual values and social cognitive processes affect psychological climate, which in turn has an influence on an individual's attitudes and behaviour. Employees' perceptions of organisational climate affect their performance. Although individuals may differ in the way they evaluate and interpret information, the climate present in the organisation is a collective view of the employees. Organisational climate is therefore particularly important for organisations and leaders because it has an impact on how employees behave, as well as their attitudes towards their work, which subsequently affect their performance.

Stringer (2002) claims that organisational climate drives performance because it is directly tied to motivation. Moreover, it was found that positive organisational climate is related to high levels of morale and motivation (Ananthan et al., 2015). As previously mentioned, organisational climate is a multidimensional and complex construct. The next section helps to broaden our understanding of the dimensions of organisational climate.

## 2.5.2 The dimensions of organisational climate

Researchers who study organisational climate have used various dimensions to explain it, and this is a clear indication that there is considerable diversity in the number and type of dimensions that explain organisational climate (Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Campbell, Dunette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Patterson et al., 2005). According to Forehand and Gilmer (1964), organisational climate comprises five dimensions, namely structure, size of the organisation, complexity, leadership style, and goal direction. Later, Litwin and Stringer (1968) identified six dimensions, namely structure, responsibility, reward, risk, warmth, and support, while Campbell et al. (1970) suggested four dimensions of organisational climate, namely structure, autonomy, support, and reward. This diversity of the measure of organisational climate proves that different organisations have different climates because of differences in size, nature, culture, complexity, and mission.

One of the major problems with climate studies is the specification of appropriate climate dimensions (Suifan, 2016). Castro and Martins (2010) recommend that an organisation identifies exactly what dimensions to focus on, in order to be able to determine its own overall climate. This study focused on organisational climate dimensions that were identified by Patterson et al. (2005). Table 2.1 illustrates how Patterson et al. (2005) categorise the 17 dimensions into four quadrants.

**Table 2.1: Organisational climate dimensions**

Quadrant	Dimension
1. Human relations	Autonomy
	Integration
	Participation
	Supervisory support
	Training
	Welfare
2. Open systems	Innovation and flexibility
	Outward focus
	Reflexivity
3. Rational goal	Clarity of organisational goals
	Efficiency
	Effort
	Performance feedback
	Pressure to produce
	Quality
4. Internal process	Formalisation
	Tradition

(Patterson et al., 2005, p. 44)

Patterson et al. (2005) developed the OCM, which measures 17 dimensions that are grouped into four quadrants. Firstly, the human relations approach reflects the extent to which the organisation emphasises the wellbeing, growth, and commitment of its members. Secondly, the open systems approach emphasises interaction and the organisation's readiness to change, and norms and values are associated with growth, resource acquisition, creativity, and adaptation.

Thirdly, the rational goal approach reflects the pursuit and attainment of well-defined objectives, where norms and values are associated with productivity, efficiency, goal accomplishment, and performance feedback. Lastly, the internal process approach concerns rules, procedures, and coordination within the work environment. It should be noted that although the OCM measures 17 dimensions, only 15 dimensions were considered for this study, and these dimensions are described below. Reflexivity and outward focus were not considered because of the nature of the military organisation.

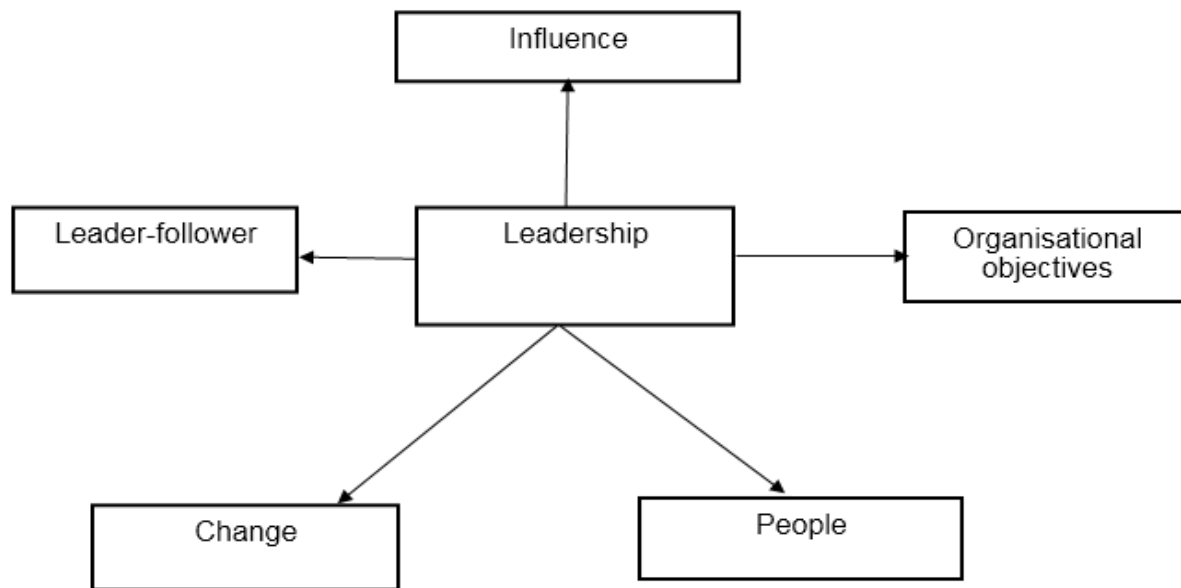
- **Autonomy:** The perception of self-determination with respect to work procedures, goals, and priorities (Koys & DeCotiis, 1991).
- **Integration:** Refers to interdepartmental cooperation and trust (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Innovation and flexibility:** The perception that change and creativity are encouraged, including risk taking into new areas where the member has little or no prior experience. (Koys & DeCotiis, 1991).
- **Participation:** The extent to which employees have considerable influence over decision making (Werner, 2016).
- **Supervisor support:** The extent to which employees experience support and understanding from their immediate supervisor (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Training:** Concerns the development of employee skills (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Welfare:** Refers to the degree to which the organisation cares for its employees (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Clarity of organisational goals:** Concerns how well employees are informed about their work setting (Werner, 2016).

- **Efficiency:** The extent to which staff effectiveness and productivity on the job are of significance (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Effort:** Refers to how hard the employees in the organisation work to achieve goals (Beckmann & Cornelissen, 2014).
- **Performance feedback:** Refers to the measurement of how employees are performing in their job (Werner, 2016).
- **Pressure to produce:** The perception of time demands with respect to task competition and performance standards (Koys & DeCotiis, 1991).
- **Quality:** Refers to the emphasis on quality processes and procedures (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Formalisation:** Concerns the rules and procedures of the organisation (Patterson et al., 2005).
- **Tradition:** Refers to the extent to which determined procedures and methods are appreciated and valued (Patterson et al., 2005).

This study used the OCM to measure organisational climate. The literature does not provide consensus on the set of dimensions of organisational climate, but the OCM is viewed as a comprehensive measure. The OCM is therefore considered a good measure of climate because of its great diversity of factors included in the measure.

## 2.6 LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR

Several definitions of leadership are provided in the literature. Lussier and Achua (2007, p. 7) define leadership as “the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organisational objectives through change”. Lussier and Achua (2007, p. 7) identify five key elements of leadership, which are illustrated in Figure 2.6.



**Figure 2.6: Key elements of leadership**

(Lussier & Achua, 2007, p. 7)

Charton (1993, p. 33) defines leadership as “the ability of a manager to induce followers to work with confidence and zeal”, while Van Dyk and Van Niekerk (2004, p. 324) define it as “the art of influencing and directing men in such a way as to obtain their obedience, confidence, respect and loyal cooperation”. Igbaekemen (2014, p. 126) defines leadership as “the art of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of goals”. The abovementioned definitions have in common that leadership is about striving to achieve organisational objectives through directing, influencing, and modelling desired behaviours so that subordinates willingly follow their leader’s directives. Leadership is also regarded as a process in which the leader influences a group of followers to willingly and eagerly direct their efforts to achieve a common objective (Northouse, 2001). According to this view, leadership is seen as a *process* in that both the leader and followers participate and engage with one another to achieve organisational outcomes.

Dhladhla (2011, p. 13) argues that “it is during this process where the leaders’ behaviours influence and shape the followers’ attitudes”. Anyango (2015) insists that leadership is an important factor in the social relationships of groups in the work environment and in realising the organisation’s set objectives. Leadership has been described as a predictor of organisational outcomes, and these outcomes may be negative or positive depending on the leadership behaviour. Moreover,

organisational goals and objectives can never be attained without the help of proper leadership style. Generally, every leader demonstrates different behaviour in leading his or her followers, and this is known as leadership style (hereafter referred to as leadership behaviour). Leadership behaviour covers all aspects of dealing with people in an organisation, such as management of conflicts, helping and guiding the workforce to achieve and accomplish their tasks, and being a role model for all (Anyango, 2015).

Leadership is an important part of military life. Unlike other organisations, the dependency of followers on the leader is greater in the military organisation. Leaders set the conditions prior to deployment (Griffith, 2006) and organisations characterised by weak or indistinct leadership, betrayed expectations, and unclear roles create a poor psychosocial environment (Strandmark & Hallberg, 2007). In addition, Britt et al. (2004) hold the view that leaders create a shared sense of reality, which includes a shared sense of vision, values, mission, and priority. This sense of reality has an effect on soldiers' wellbeing and performance. Leadership style in the military is greatly influenced by the culture of the organisation and obeying orders is an essential aspect of the military profession (Collins & Jacobs, 2002). Schein (2004) states that there is a correlation between organisational culture and leadership style.

The military is high on power distance because of its hierarchical and rank structure. This means that there are commanders and subordinate commanders and that decisions of the higher authority have a direct impact on the subordinates. Adherence to the chain of command is rigid and subordinates are aware of whom they directly report to. In addition, Radebe (2009) states that even the highest rank (Minister of Defence) is subordinate to the civilian authority that entrusted them with the responsibility to maintain effective authority. The leader-follower relationship could be limited because of the prescription of how commissioned officers, NCOs, and privates should interact. Kark, Karazi-Presler, and Tubi (2016) argue that positive leader-follower relationships exist in the military, although the military culture requires that there should be distance between the leader and followers. Positive leader-follower relationships develop as a result of social exchange relationships.

NCOs and officers have different levels of responsibility and authority (Chen & Bliese, 2002). In short, the military culture lays the foundation for relations between

ranks. Military leaders are responsible for subordinates' wellbeing, training, evaluating their performance (Chen & Bliese, 2002), and ensuring that all members make sacrifices in the pursuit of mission success (Castro, Adler, McGurk, & Thomas, 2006). According to Novac and Bratanov (2014), an important characteristic of leadership is the style demonstrated by the leader. Some leaders are more interested in the work to be done than in the people they work with, while others pay more attention to their relationship with their followers than the job. The leadership style leaders choose will determine whether they will accomplish long-term organisational goals and the task at hand or not, and whether they will be able to achieve and maintain positive relationships with staff (Iqbal, Anwar, & Haider, 2015).

It is therefore important for an organisation to have knowledge of the leadership behaviour that can have a positive effect on employee attitudes and behaviour. Research indicates that organisations could benefit immensely from adopting positive leadership practices (Wong & Cummings, 2009; Dhladhla, 2011; Anyango, 2015). According to Shinga (2015), leaders in the military are no exception as they too have an impact on employee attitudes and behaviours, given their daily interaction with soldiers at individual and group level during both peacetime and military operations.

Moreover, Britt et al. (2004) suggest that leaders have a great influence on soldiers' health and adaptation to combat stressors. They therefore recommend that it is important that the military understands how leadership can be used to buffer the effects of combat stressors. Several leadership researchers have investigated which leadership style is the most effective (Aucamp, 2014; Wong & Cummings, 2009). Leadership contingency theories argue that effective leadership is highly contextual, and that the practices of effective leaders are an appropriate response to their contexts (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

The Hersey and Blanchard leadership model advocates that effective leadership behaviour should vary depending on followers' readiness (Cairns, Hollenback, Preziosi, & Snow, 1998). Followers' readiness in this context refers to subordinates' level of experience, motivation, competence, and preparedness to accept responsibility and the influence of the leader. For example, when followers' readiness is low, the leader should clearly define expectations and direction.

When followers' readiness is moderate, the leader should allow followers to participate in decision making. When followers' readiness is high, the leader should let subordinates work independently by adopting a delegating style (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005). Leaders must know which leadership behaviour to adopt for a given situation.

Transactional leadership and transformational leadership, as proposed by Burns (1978), have received greater attention in recent years. These leadership styles attempt to understand employees' needs and help employees fulfil work objectives. Transformational leaders focus on higher-order intrinsic needs (Aucamp, 2014), whereas transactional leaders focus on the proper exchange of resources (Anyango, 2015). Igbaekemen (2014) argues that leaders should maximise their influence by employing both transformational and transactional leadership styles in order to be effective. The MLQ is used to measure transactional and transformational leadership. The MLQ was developed by Bass and Avolio (1992) and it has been widely used across organisations and countries (see Section 3.6.2).

### **2.6.1 Transformational leadership**

Transformational leadership is characterised by the ability to bring about organisational change and inspires followers by providing a vision and developing a culture that stimulates high performance.

This type of leadership conveys a sense of mission, stimulates learning experiences, and inspires creative ways of thinking. This is done through mentoring and coaching followers, which motivates followers to do more than their normal duties and responsibilities require (Boonzaier, 2008). This type of engagement from the leader is important especially in the military context as it takes a real interest in the wellbeing of followers.

According to Jin (2010, p.174), transformational leadership integrates the "elements of empathy, compassion, sensitivity, relationship building, and innovation". Moreover, transformational leaders inspire followers to align their goals with those of the organisation (Wong & Cummings, 2009). These types of leaders also inspire followers to believe in themselves and go beyond what is expected of them (Aucamp, 2014). Transformational leadership can also be explained by the effect it



has on followers, as followers demonstrate a sense of admiration, trust, and loyalty towards the leader. This type of a leader can promote positive attitudes and energy in his or her followers. Boonzaier (2008) states that transformational leadership is based on social exchange relationships. This means that the leader-follower relationship creates future obligations. For instance, when the leader engages in helping behaviours towards followers, the followers feel obligated to engage in positive behaviour as a way of repaying the leader.

Transformational leaders communicate a vision that inspires and motivates their followers to achieve something extraordinary. They are models of integrity and fairness, set clear goals, have high expectations, provide support and recognition, stir the emotions and passions of people, and get people to look beyond their self-interest to reach for the improbable (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). Radebe (2009) argues that military leaders should demonstrate desirable behaviours, such as patriotism and a good work ethic, so that followers are motivated, that subsequently mould trust and pride in subordinate soldiers. In his speech addressing military cadets at the British Military Academy passing out parade in 1944, Dwight D. Eisenhower said:

You must know every single one of your men. It is not enough that you are the best soldier in that unit, that you are the strongest, the toughest, the most durable and the best equipped technically. You must be their leader, their father, their mentor, even if you are half their age. You must understand their problems. That cultivation of human understanding between you and your men is the one art that you must yet master, and you must master it quickly (cited in Grint, 2007, p.187).

His speech highlighted that leadership also requires an emotional connection with followers and that leaders should take responsibility for their subordinates' wellbeing. Along the same lines, Mpofu and Van Dyk (2016) agree that transformational leadership has a great influence on followers' wellbeing. Shinga (2015) emphasises that a leader who embraces military values and warmth and motivate followers inspires the followers to have trust in leadership and to follow the leader's directives willingly, even in combat. Transformational leaders can deal with a range of challenges that subordinates are confronted with during deployments.

The MLQ measures four elements of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1992). Firstly, idealised influence reflects leader behaviour that can hold followers' trust and sets an example for followers that is consistent with the values they hold (Aucamp, 2014). Secondly, using inspirational motivation, transformational leaders motivate and inspire followers by communicating a clear vision of the ideal future and make followers feel good about their work. They also stimulate individual and team spirit with enthusiasm and optimism (Du Plessis, 2015). According to Hamad (2015), soldiers are expected to set the nation's interest before their own, and it is through the transformational leader's use of inspirational motivation that soldiers are elevated to that level and develop trust in their leader.

Thirdly, intellectual stimulation refers to the leader encouraging his or her followers to be innovative (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012), which could increase task clarity for followers while decreasing uncertainties and ambiguity. Lastly, individualised consideration reflects the leader's ability to pay attention to individual needs and development (Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). Leaders who individually demonstrate their genuine concern regarding their followers' problems entrust them with various opportunities and care for their wellbeing. Subordinates then feel impelled to respond to these efforts in the same manner, by initiating a social exchange relationship (Zaharia & Hutu, 2016).

The leader's individualised consideration also significantly contributes to followers going beyond their call of duty and responsibilities; they also develop strong emotional bonds with their followers (Wong & Cummings, 2009). Positive leadership practices such as listening to subordinates' problems and maintaining professionalism were found to be associated with high morale and cohesion during deployments (Thompson & Gignac, 2001). According to Griffith (2002), effective leadership should be based on personal relationships between the leader and followers rather than an impersonal leadership style.

Transformational leaders have personal relationships with their followers and maintain unit cohesion. Leaders must balance successful mission accomplishment with how they treat and care for organisational members. Taking care of people involves creating and sustaining a positive climate through open communications, trust, cohesion, and teamwork. Bass and Avolio (1990) claim that transformational

leadership can be exercised at all levels of the organisation, including non-leadership positions. This is because transformational leaders motivate their followers to engage in self-leadership.

Self-leadership refers to self-influencing behaviours and realising one's strengths and weaknesses, which consequently lead to self-development and higher performance (Van Zyl, 2015). According to Mpofu and Van Dyk (2016), the dynamic nature of deployments requires soldiers to possess self-leadership because commanders are not always in close proximity (such as in patrols) to their subordinates (troops). In instances like ambush, subordinates with self-leadership will be flexible and will be able to make ethical decisions.

Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Berson (2003) suggest that transformational leadership is the core of what they call adaptive leaders, which is what the military needs. Adaptive leaders demonstrate ethical and moral conduct. Moreover, they adjust well to changing environments and they work with their subordinates to solve complex problems. Empirical evidence indicates that transformational leadership is related to a number of positive organisational outcomes, such as group cohesion (Thompson & Gignac, 2001), trust (Zaharia & Hutu, 2016), meaningful work, employee wellbeing (Mehari, 2015), and team effectiveness (Aucamp, 2014). After a review of transformational leadership literature, this study proposes that soldiers under transformational leaders will be willing to deploy.

### **2.6.2 Transactional leadership**

Transactional leadership emphasises task completion and employee compliance and relies mainly on organisational rewards and punishment to influence employees. Bass and Avolio (1992) suggest that transactional leadership consists of three components that can be measured utilising the MLQ.

These components are active management by exception, contingent reward, and passive management by exception. To begin with, when a transactional leader uses the contingent reward dimension, he or she clarifies expectations and offers recognition when goals are achieved. The clarification of goals and objectives and providing recognition once goals are achieved should result in individuals and groups achieving expected levels of performance (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001).

Next, with active management by exception, the leader specifies the standards for compliance, as well as what constitutes ineffective performance and unacceptable behaviour. The leader may punish followers for being non-compliant with those standards (Du Plessis, 2015). This type of leadership implies close monitoring for deviances and mistakes and thereafter takes corrective action. Finally, passive management by exception or *laissez-faire* refers to the leader waiting for mistakes or problems to arise before acting (Boonzaier, 2008). Such leaders avoid clarifying expectations and the goals to be achieved.

Wong and Cummings (2009) are of the view that transactional leadership is the main factor to higher-order leadership strategies, which have the potential to unlock employee potential. A leader who displays this type of behaviour usually values order and structure. Transactional leaders have formal authority and positions of responsibility in an organisation. This type of leader is responsible for maintaining routine by managing individual performance and facilitating group performance. Daft (2015) found that transactional leaders help build subordinates' confidence and improve morale and productivity. The transactional leadership style emphasises the ability of a leader to make his or her followers aware of the link between effort and rewards (Popper, 1996) and generally focuses on the impersonal aspects of job performance (Daft, 2015). Tavanti (2008) states that transactional leaders tend to maintain the status quo and they are usually uncomfortable with change. Moreover, employees will not be encouraged to come up with innovative ideas. Followers under transactional leaders are more concerned about fairness in results, which is affected by their level of trust in their leader (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994) and which keeps employees disciplined because it serves as a control system of reward and punishment (Rathore, Khaliq, & Aslam, 2017).

This is because followers believe that the leader is someone who can be relied on regarding promised transactions and that the leader is seen as credible. Transactional leadership defines expectations and promotes performance to achieve these levels. Kane and Tremble (2000) found that the transactional style is strongly associated with the military structure. The reason for this could be that this type of leadership requires compliance by subordinates through rewards or sanctions. Moreover, a transactional leader would be effective where immediate compliance to orders is required, as in ambush situations. Furthermore, Van Dyk and Van Niekerk

(2004) postulate that the emphasis of leadership in the military is not only charisma and vision, but command and control as well. Military personnel are required to follow rules, regulations, and commands to coordinate military operations. In other words, military leaders must plan, guide, influence, and decide on behalf of their followers. The military does not allow or tolerate the questioning of authority or structure. Military traditionalists insist on unquestioning obedience.

The success of this type of leader-follower relationship depends on the acceptance of hierarchical differences and the ability to work through the exchange relationship. The military is known for its hierarchical rank structure and strong traditions (Collins & Jacobs, 2002). For example, the military has a variety of positive inducements and these are embedded in the organisation's culture, such as awarding medals or awards to soldiers for outstanding service, achievement, or effective combat behaviour. The military corrects negative behaviour through disciplinary action (Radebe, 2009). For the military, punishment of misconduct is the common way to develop an orderly and efficient unit.

Transactional leaders exhibit specific leadership skills usually associated with the ability to obtain results, to control through structures and processes, to solve problems, to plan and organise, and to work within the structures and boundaries of the organisation. As the transactional style revolves around the formulation and maintenance of a contract, negotiation skills are essential for this type of leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). According to MacKenzie et al. (2001) the exchange will happen successfully only based on clear and effective communication skills. While leaders need to clearly define job descriptions and task assignments, subordinates must be able to show results and fulfil the leader's expectations. Effective transactional leaders are capable of (1) clarifying what is expected of employees' performance, (2) explaining how to meet such expectations, (3) spelling out the criteria of the evaluation of their performance, (4) providing feedback on whether the employee is meeting the objective(s), and (5) allocating rewards that are contingent to their meeting the objectives (Tavanti, 2008).

Transactional leadership exemplifies the most common dynamics of social exchange between leadership and fellowship. Many transactional leadership studies have shown that the nature of the exchange process between leaders and subordinates

can highly influence group performance, trust, and morale (Bass, 1992; Bass et al., 2003; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). This study therefore proposes that soldiers under transactional leadership will be willing to deploy.

## **2.7 TRUST**

Trust is a fundamental component of formulating and maintaining healthy working relationships (Dirks, 1999; Wong & Cummings, 2009) and promoting individual welfare and organisational effectiveness (Engelbrecht & Cloete, 2000). The literature does not provide a single widely accepted definition of trust. According to Dietz, Gillespie, and Chao (2010, p. 10), trust refers to the “willingness to be vulnerable in a situation of risk and confident in positive expectations”. Ferres (2001) suggests that trust involves willingness to act under uncertainty. According to Costa, Roe, and Taillieu (2001, p. 228), trust is defined as a “psychological state that manifests itself in the behaviours towards others, is based on the expectations made upon behaviours of these others, and on the perceived motives and intentions in situations entailing risk for the relationship with these others”. For the purposes of this study, the definition outlined by Costa et al. (2002) was adopted because it provides a broader view of trust as it comprises all the definitions that were stated above.

Trust is regarded as a multidimensional construct that constitutes multiple factors at cognitive, emotional, and behavioural levels; all of which affect an individual's perceptions of trust. In support of this view, Ferres (2001) insists that trust involves feelings, thoughts, and actions. The cognitive factor of trust refers to the follower's confidence or willingness to rely on the leader's competency and reliability. It arises from accumulated knowledge that allows one to make predictions grounded on facts, with some level of confidence, regarding the likelihood that the other party will fulfil his or her obligations. Knowledge is accumulated from observations of partner behaviour within the focal relationship (Johnson & Grayson, 1995). Affective trust is the confidence one places in a partner based on feelings generated by the level of care and concern the partner demonstrates. It is characterised by feelings of security and the perceived strength of the relationship (Ferres, 2001).

There is a third component of trust, namely behavioural trust, which constitutes actions that flow from a state of thinking and feeling trust. Trust at an affective level

gives followers a feeling of security, even in dangerous situations, and the necessary willingness to accomplish what it takes to complete the mission (Zaharia & Hutu, 2016). Followers will analyse the leader's behaviour; the leader must therefore earn the trust of his or her followers through actions and communication and consistent behaviour. Trust at a behavioural level allows followers to trust their leader; they will provide him or her with clear and timely information and will not hesitate to engage in cooperative behaviour, which can be extremely useful for task completion (Boe & Bergstøl, 2017).

Some scholars have reported that trust is culturally rooted as it is closely tied to the norms, values, and beliefs of the culture of the organisation (Hartdog, Shippers, & Koopman, 2002; Ferres, 2001). Konovsky and Pugh (1994) suggest that trust forms the basis of the social exchange theory. In essence, it is based on the individual's expectations of how others are likely to behave in the future. Trust is relevant in situations that comprise risk, vulnerability, uncertainty, and interdependence (Keyton & Smith, 2009). Trust is necessary and essential for a leader to exercise influence in combat. According to Sweeney, Thompson, and Blanton (2009), the level of trust that soldiers have in their leaders determines the amount of influence subordinates are willing to accept beyond compliance. Soldiers who trust their leaders allow them a greater degree of influence regarding the soldiers' readiness to follow directives and motivation to perform duties to complete the mission (Boe & Bergstøl, 2017). Hartdog et al. (2002) posit that trust is important for cooperation; meaning that it increases the ability of the group to work together. Trust is therefore important in the military environment because the organisation works in teams when completing tasks. Dirks (1999) attests that trust improves cooperation and motivation, which in turn will improve the group's execution of tasks. The military context gives rise to the highest forms of risk, vulnerability, and uncertainty; trust is therefore a critical factor for security. For instance, military operations often involve high interdependence; counting on others to perform their work and roles competently, and to provide mutual support under conditions of risk and uncertainty (Sweeney, 2010). This implies that if soldiers trust their leader and teammates, they will probably perceive more safety in continuing fighting alongside them. Hamilton (2010) reminds us that soldiers are very conscious of the fact that their survival is dependent on others in the group. If this awareness is ever in doubt, cohesion will suffer significantly.



Trust leads to a set of behavioural expectations among people, which allow them to manage the uncertainty or risk associated with their interactions so that they can jointly optimise the gains that will result from cooperative behaviour. At the same time, high levels of interdependence are also required and the cost of one's trust being violated could be fatal. In a military operation, one does not always know for sure what the teammates are likely to do. One must therefore make assumptions about the competence of others' actions and about the positivity of their intentions (Sweeney, 2010).

According to Bews (2000), there are two categories of trust that have been documented, namely trust in a leader and organisational trust. According to Tan and Tan (2000, p. 243), trust in a leader is defined as "the willingness of a subordinate to be vulnerable to the actions of his or her supervisors whose behaviour and actions he or she cannot control". This means that trust in a leader is related to interpersonal trust and interactions, while organisational trust is defined as an "employee's confidence that the organisation will perform an action that is beneficial to him or her" (Tan & Tan, 2000, p. 243). Trust in a leader is often referred to as interpersonal trust, while organisational trust refers to trust in the system. In other words, trust in a leader is more immediate and circumscribed, whereas organisational trust is general. The WTS, which was developed by Ferres (2001), was used to measure trust for this study (see Section 3.6.4). The WTS distinguishes between trust in the organisation, trust in the leader, and trust in co-workers. This study focused on trust in a leader and organisational trust.

### **2.7.1 Trust in a leader**

Trust in a leader and interpersonal trust are often used interchangeably (Dirks, 1999). Literature on trust in a leader advances two perspectives, namely character-based and relationship-based perspectives (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The *character-based perspective* focuses on the leader's attributes. This means that employees will consider the leader's trustworthiness and the risk involved in trusting the leader. The perception of the leader and the perception of the risk are then weighed up against each other to come to the decision to trust or distrust the leader (Bews, 2000).



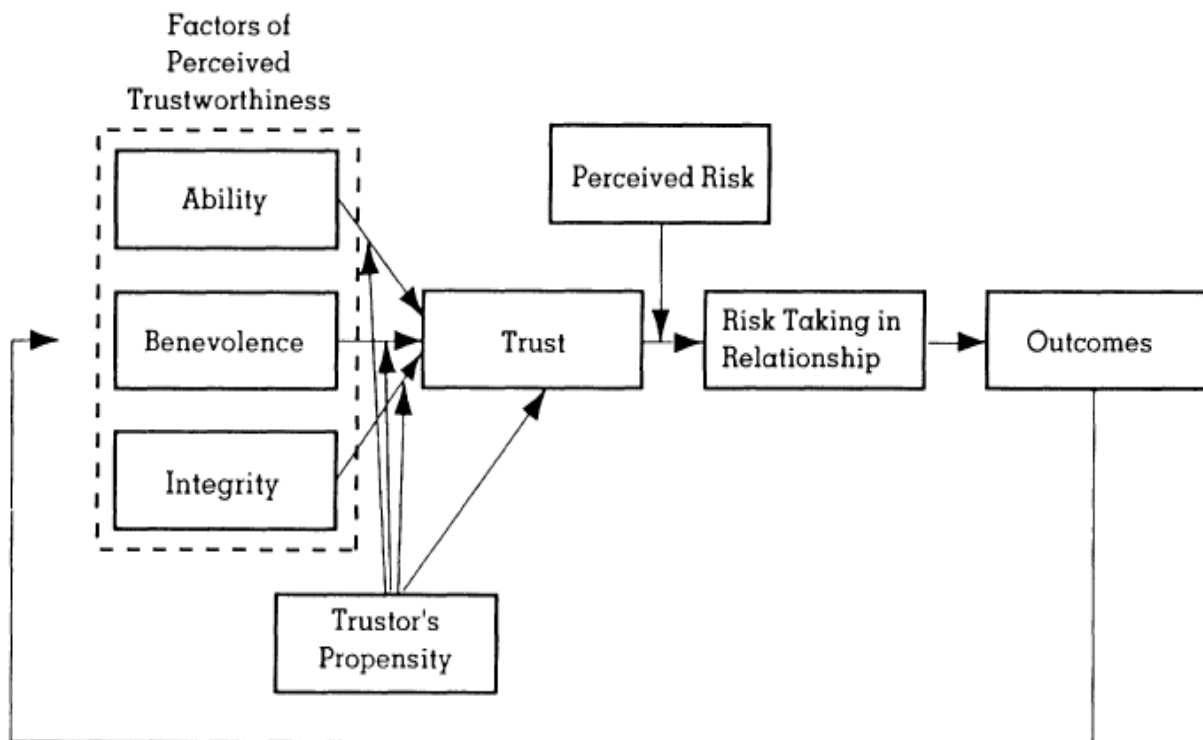
Being trusted by one's followers may create an obligation on the part of the leader to enable or motivate followers to perform (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). In addition, followers who trust their leaders are likely to exert extra effort and obtain increased levels of intrinsically based satisfaction because of positive emotions associated with trust (Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, & Yang, 2006). Akin to this view, Sweeney (2010) emphasises that the dynamic nature of deployments and the risks involved in accomplishing the mission demand trust between leaders and subordinates to ensure organisational success. Obeying orders is an essential aspect of the military profession, and Sweeney (2010) explains that soldiers are expected to give up their right to self-determination and follow orders. It is unlikely that followers will be willing to deploy with leaders they do not trust. Therefore, in order to perform effectively and exert extra effort, followers need to trust their leader.

Sweeney (2010) investigated whether soldiers re-evaluate trust in their immediate leaders prior to combat operations. His study revealed that a significant number of soldiers reconsidered trust in their immediate commander. According to Dietz et al. (2010), trust is founded on the trustor's (subordinate) judgement of the trustee's (leader) trustworthiness based on available evidence. According to Bews (2000), trust in a leader or personal trust is often categorised in a few broad components; the first being competence, which is the ability of the leader to perform tasks, as well as his or her capabilities, expertise, experience, and skills (Judeh, 2016).

Kellett (2013) adds that one characteristic that promotes trust in a military leader is his or her competence because a skilful leader instils a feeling of security in his or her subordinates. Military personnel are expected to follow orders given by their leaders and any mistake made by the leader may result in death or serious injury. Moreover, a study conducted in the Iraqi combat zone found that soldiers reconsidered trust in their leaders prior to combat operations, to ensure that they had the competence and character to meet the greater demands of leading in combat (Kellett, 2013). According to Bester and Stanz (2007), followers not only need to trust the leader's competency or ability, but also their team members in order to establish a high level of combat readiness. The second component is integrity, which refers to a set of principles that subordinates find acceptable (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995).

If the leader is not honest and does not maintain ethical standards, followers are unlikely to commit to the goals set by the leader, for fear of putting themselves at risk (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). This implies that there should be congruence between the leader's words and his or her actions. The third component is benevolence, which refers to the degree of consideration the leader has for the subordinates, and the last component is predictability, which refers to the extent to which the leader's behaviour is consistent (Bews, 2000). Leaders with these attributes are therefore more likely to be seen as trustworthy and subordinates are more likely to feel safer and more positive about a leader's decision making.

Sweeney (2010) argues that the military is different from civilian organisations, and Bew's (2000) four antecedents of leader-trustworthiness (competency, integrity, benevolence, and predictability) limit followers' evaluation of whether the leader is to be trusted or not. Sweeney (2010) further suggests that trust in a military leader is categorised by ten attributes, namely competency, loyalty, integrity, leading by example, self-control, confidence, courage, information sharing, personal connection with followers, and sense of duty. The leader should convince his or her followers that he or she is trustworthy. These trustworthiness factors of a leader are reflected in everyday interactions with followers (Bews, 2000). The second approach is the *relationship-based perspective*, which concerns the nature of the leader-follower relationship. This perspective is grounded on social exchange relationships. Trust in the leader-follower relationship facilitates open communication, cooperation, mutual dependence, and empowerment, which contribute to the establishment of positive relationships, which subsequently enhances both individual and group effectiveness (Sweeney, 2010). Mayer et al. (1995) propose an integrated model of interpersonal trust, as depicted in Figure 2.7.



**Figure 2.7: Integrated model of interpersonal trust**

(Mayer et al., 1995, p. 715)

This model considers the characteristics of the leader, the followers' propensity to trust, and the risk-taking relationships. Unlike Bews' (2000) model of trustworthiness, Mayer et al. (1995) focus on three antecedents of trustworthiness. The authors argue that trust leads to risk taking in relationships. The lower the perceived risk and the greater the trust within a specific context (the context in which the risk is to be taken is important), the more likely it is that risk taking will occur within the trust relationship. The outcomes of the risk taking can vary from extremely positive to extremely negative. These outcomes then feed back to the trustee and increase or decrease his or her level of trustworthiness (Aucamp, 2014). Propensity to trust is rooted in individual characteristics such as personality and cultural background (Bews, 2000).

Trust is obtained when followers believe that their leaders will engage in fair exchanges, and that their citizenship behaviour will be appropriately recognised and rewarded. In contrast, Hamad (2015) argues that transactional leadership does not permit good relationships between subordinate soldiers and commanders. As a result, there is a lack of trust, and the relationship between the subordinate soldier and the commander ends once the task has been completed.

It is clear that researchers have different views regarding the relationship between transactional leadership and trust. Admittedly, followers will follow a leader whom they trust and will be willing to engage in behaviours that might put them at risk (Mayer et al., 1995). It can be concluded based on the two perspectives that were discussed that trust in a military leader depends on the followers' perceptions of their leader as a competent, benevolent, open, and a fair individual. Because followers constantly monitor leadership, it is the leaders' responsibility to create and foster an environment of trust before military operations. This will serve to reinforce confidence in the followers that the leader will be able to successfully execute the mission (Aucamp, 2014). Shinga (2015) reaffirms that trust allows team members to interact and engage more freely with one another, which will enhance teamwork processes and performance. In addition, trust in the leadership and organisation elicits followers to put the needs of the organisation before their own, which is what the SANDF requires from its members.

### **2.7.2 Organisational trust**

According to Tan and Tan (2000), organisational trust is the acceptance of the goals and values of the organisation and the desire to continue working in the organisation. Ferres (2001, p. 19) defines organisational trust as "the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of others". Similarly, according to Van Staden (2007, p. 21), organisational trust "involves faith or confidence in the intentions or actions of a person or a group, the expectation of ethical, fair, and nonthreatening behaviour, and concerns for the rights of others in exchange relationships". It has also been described as employees' collective perceptions and expectations of their organisation, such as organisational justice and organisational support (Bagraim & Hime, 2007). Organisational trust can therefore be said to be the belief that management has good intentions and that organisational justice exists, and employees accept decisions issued by management (Casimir et al., 2006). Hakkinen (2012) argues that followers' perceptions of organisational trust depend on two elements, namely the structure and the culture of the organisation, which include management policies and behavioural rules. In the same way, Samadi, Wei, Seyfee, and Yusoff (2015) state that employees' perception of organisational trust is based on their ability to predict

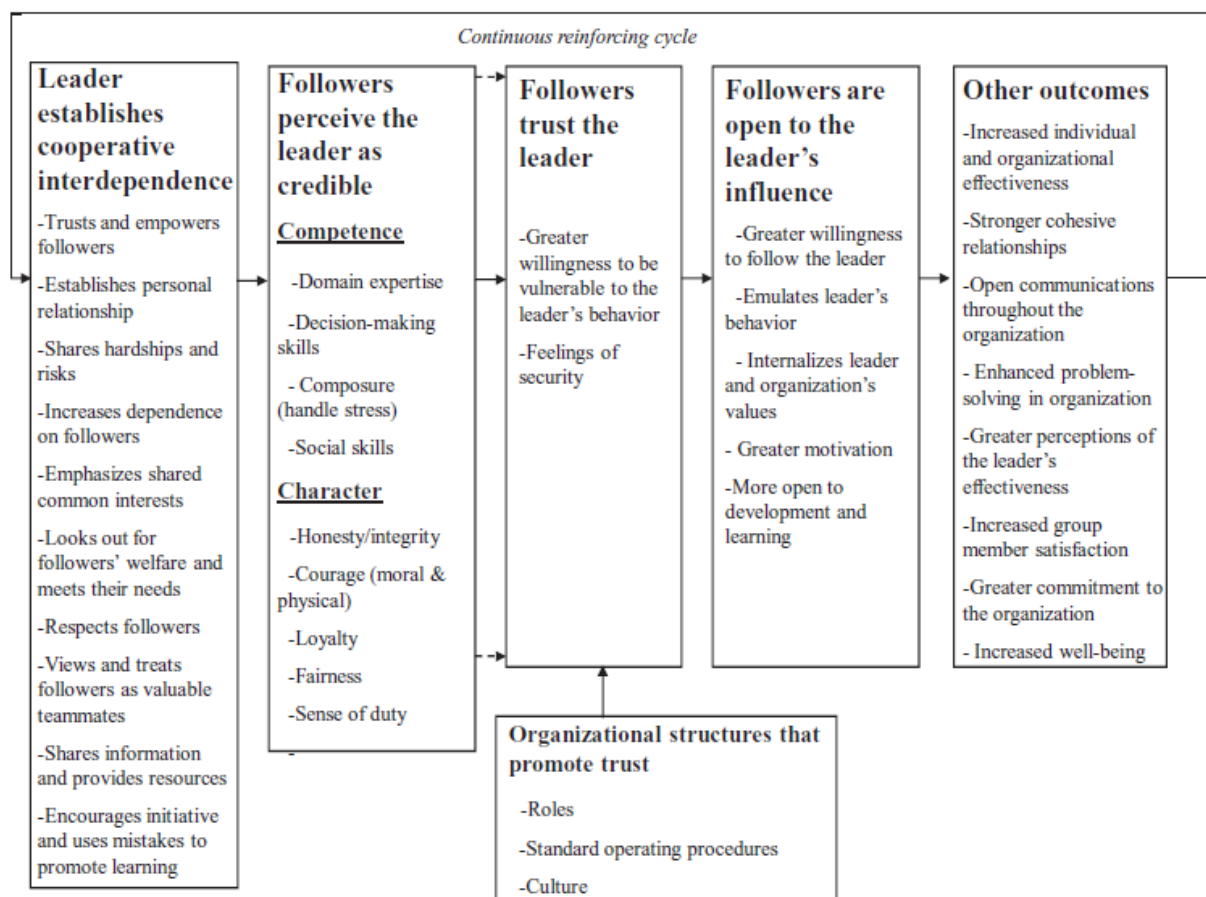
career advancement, security, and support from the organisation. In this sense, trust in the organisation derives from employees' perception of justice from their leader and organisation, which leads to trust in a leader and organisation. According to Hakkinen (2012), organisational trust depends on followers' perceptions of trust, the leader's trustworthy behaviour (integrity, competency, and benevolence), and organisational factors such as culture, structure, and organisational policies. According to Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen (2002), an important aspect in increasing productivity and organisational effectiveness is organisational trust. Organisational trust has shown to have a positive influence on organisational effectiveness because of its association with positive work outcomes. High levels of trust have been found to have a positive influence on soldiers' morale and unit cohesion (Cassel, 1993) and a positive work climate (Thomas & Barrios-Choplin, 1996). Moreover, Shinga (2015) argues that trust ensures that commands are executed without doubt, especially during dangerous situations like ambushes.

Other trust-based work outcomes include job involvement, cooperation, job satisfaction, a decrease in co-worker conflict, a decrease in turnover intentions, and an increase in organisational commitment (Zaharia & Hutu, 2016). In addition, Zeffane, Tipu, and Ryan (2011) found that trust has positive attitudinal consequences, such as organisational commitment, and employees tend to exert more effort in participating in the organisation and improving their productivity. As most organisations are moving towards a team-based approach, trust is crucial to team effectiveness. After a review of trust literature, this study proposes that soldiers will not be willing to deploy with commanders they do not trust and if they do not have trust in their organisation.

## **2.8 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF TRUST**

Sweeney, Matthews, and Lester (2011) warn that military deployments should be distinguished from peacetime (while in the unit) as the former is physically and psychologically demanding. Military deployments demand trust, which is necessary to handle the responsibility for group members' wellbeing and lives. Steiner and Neuman (1978) postulate that psychiatric breakdown during deployments can be attributed to lack of trust. It has already been established that trust is a critical element in the military (see Section 2.7) as soldiers are expected to perform tasks

that place their physical and mental wellbeing at risk, and that trust is an important factor for risk taking. Moreover, the hierarchical structure of the military puts followers in a vulnerable position in relation to their leaders. Trust elucidates the quality of social exchanges by reducing uncertainties in relationships and allowing the leader-follower relationship to obtain support, information, and other valuable resources (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Subordinates who benefit from organisational trust feel obliged to reciprocate the favour by engaging in positive behaviours and attitudes (DeConinck, 2010). In addition, trust provides conditions that facilitate cooperation and employees directing their efforts towards the same objective (Sweeney et al., 2011). In brief, trust binds leaders and followers together and provides capacity for organisational success. Trust facilitates the bond between military leaders and subordinates in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to their unit, organisation, and mission. Figure 2.8 illustrates how trust facilitates the relationship between leadership and organisational outcomes.



**Figure 2.8: Model of development of trust**

(Sweeney et al., 2009, p. 26)

Figure 2.8 illustrates an integrated summary of the development of trust and the link between trust and leaders' influence during both combat and peacetime. The leader establishes cooperative interdependence together with the organisational structures that help promote trust, such as standard operating procedures, roles, and culture. Followers then perceive the leader as someone who is trustworthy, which makes the followers open to the leader's influence. According to Dirks (1999), trust has been found to be the intervening variable with respect to the relationship between group performance, transformational leadership, organisational justice (Aryee et al., 2002), and employee psychological wellbeing (Kelloway, Turner, Barling, & Loughlin, 2012). Trust improves cooperation, which is essential to get the job done, and subsequently gives rise to military effectiveness. Trust in leadership is associated with higher levels of attitudinal outcomes such as organisational commitment and lower levels of turnover intentions (Searle et al., 2011). Along the same lines, Campbell, Hannah, and Matthews (2010) claim that role modelling and trust in the leader are important bases of cohesion and work climate, while Daft (2015) found that trust in a leader affects the followers' overall morale and their willingness to follow directives and take risks.

Trust has also been found to help individuals in the group or organisation to direct their efforts towards a common goal; instead of focusing on their individual doubts and personal motives (Samadi et al., 2015). On the contrary, having an untrustworthy leader may be psychologically distressing for followers, particularly when the leader has power over important aspects of one's job, and this distress is likely to affect followers' work-related attitudes. Searle et al. (2011) warn that employees with low levels of organisational trust work less effectively and engage in counterproductive behaviours. Moreover, Judeh (2016) adds that low levels of organisational trust can lead to less enthusiasm for exerting maximum effort in work, uncertainty, low morale, low commitment, and reduced job satisfaction; thus leading to less organisational effectiveness, which can be fatal in a military environment. Based on this review, it is predicted that trust will mediate the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy ( $H_{14}$ ) and trust will mediate the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy ( $H_{15}$ ).



## **2.9 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS**

This study's general objective was to explore the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on soldiers' willingness to deploy. This objective arose from the knowledge gap identified, where it became apparent after a comprehensive literature review that the relationship between leadership, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy has not been investigated together, specifically in the South African military context, even though the benefits of effective leadership and trust in civilian organisations are well documented in the literature. This section of the chapter aims to summarise the relationships between leadership, organisational climate, and trust that have been documented in the literature.

### **2.9.1 The relationship between leadership and trust**

The literature claims that transformational leadership is a determinant for the creation of trust and a supportive work climate in organisations (Gantasala & Padmakumar, 2011; Yasir, Imram, Irshad, Mohamad, & Khan, 2016). This is because characteristics of transformational leadership include fostering a climate of trust and encouraging followers to strive to do their best and achieve organisational objectives. Trust in a leader is more likely to result when a social bond has been created between a subordinate and his or her commander. Lee (2016) found that followers who trust their leader see themselves as being in a social exchange relationship with the leader. Because of this, a feeling of unspecified obligation that may stimulate extra effort may develop in followers. Campbell et al. (2010) found a positive relationship between leadership and trust. They further explain that leadership and trust are crucial factors in a military context because trust provides leaders with the ability to exercise influence beyond compliance, which is necessary to get soldiers to put the needs of the organisation before their own. Moreover, there is agreement in the literature that trust is an important element of leadership effectiveness, and that it enables cooperation (Aryee et al., 2002; Ikonen, 2013; Aucamp, 2014).



There have been different views as to which type of leadership behaviour has a stronger impact on trust. On the one hand, numerous scholars found that transformational leadership is closely associated with trust and it is through followers' trust and respect in their leader that they are motivated to perform beyond expectations (Hartdog et al., 2002; Gillespie & Mann, 2004). By definition, transformational leaders inspire their followers, while at the same time earning their trust and loyalty through the building of strong emotional bonds (Bass & Avolio, 1992; Aucamp, 2014; Du Plessis, 2015). Moreover, through communicating a compelling vision, which creates a set of shared values and objectives, leaders gain trust from their followers and thus stimulate organisational trust (De Lima Rua & Costa Araújo, 2015).

On the other hand, Casimir et al. (2006) posit that a transactional leader elicits compliance from followers; thus producing trust in the leader and ultimately trust in the organisation. If the leader provides rewards in accordance with the agreements made with followers, then trust should develop because followers will believe that the leader is someone who can be relied upon regarding promised transactions (Sweeney et al., 2009). In short, the leader is seen as someone who is credible because of his or her consistent actions. Yasir et al. (2016) found that transactional leadership increases the level of organisational trust by emphasising results and measuring success according to the organisation's system of rewards and penalties. Subordinates tend to trust a transactional leader with consistent behaviour as the exchange relationship is based on trust. Based on the review of literature this study makes the following predictions:

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust.
- H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust.

- H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust.
- H<sub>7</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and overall trust.

### **2.9.2 The relationship trust and organisational climate**

In a South African military study, Van Dyk and Van Niekerk (2004) found that organisational trust and a good work climate are positively related to positive work attitudes and task performance. McMurray and Scott (2013) found that trust was one of the main contributing factors to positive organisational climate. Moreover, they found that trust in a leader acts as a shield against the impact of combat stressors that subordinate soldiers encounter. Bann et al. (2011) argue that organisational climate is a key factor in determining employee behaviours, attitudes, morale, and perceptions. In addition, Ananthan et al., (2015) found positive correlation between organisational climate and morale and motivation. Various scholars have argued that leadership behaviour is a main determinant of the climate that exists in an organisation (Stringer, 2002; Novac & Bratanov, 2014, İşçi, Çakmak, & Karadağ, 2015). Novac and Bratanov (2014) suggest that a mismatch between leadership behaviour and organisational climate will lead to several organisational outcome failures, such as mistrust, employee turnover, low morale, lower levels of job satisfaction, and lower organisational commitment. It therefore seems reasonable to predict the following hypotheses:

- H<sub>8</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>9</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational trust.
- H<sub>10</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and overall trust.

### **2.9.3 The relationship between willingness to deploy and other constructs (trust, leadership and organisational climate)**

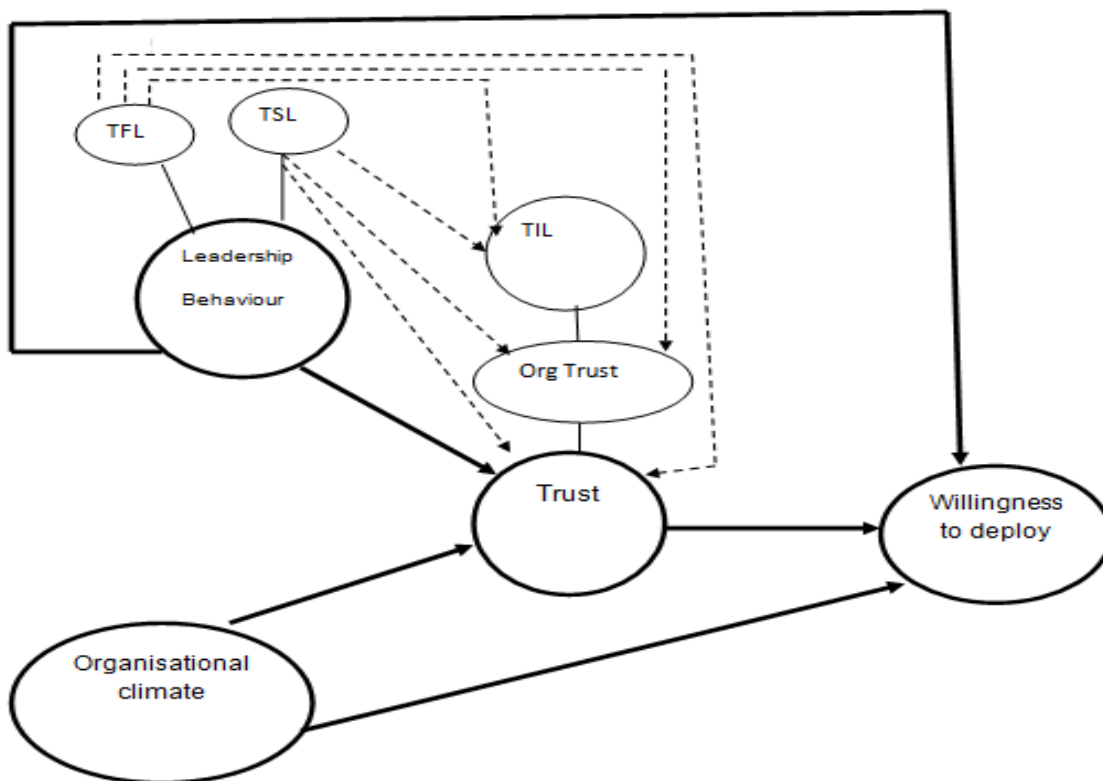
No study was found to have explored these relationships together. However, Nkewu (2014) found that willingness to deploy is associated with positive psychological wellbeing and combat readiness. In terms of the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy Nkewu (2014) found that confidence in leaders evoked willingness to deploy in soldiers. This may suggest that when soldiers may be willing to deploy with leaders they have confidence in. In addition Gal (1986) found a positive relationship between leadership and soldier's will to fight. Therefore, it is predicted that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership and willingness to deploy ( $H_{11}$ ).

In terms of the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy no study that investigated this relationship. However, Nkewu (2014) found that autonomy is positively associated with willingness to deploy. Autonomy the dimension that was included in the organisational climate factor in this study. Moreover, Aucamp (2014) and Mayer et al. (1995) found employee that perceive their work environment as conducive to their needs tends to be willing to take risks. This suggests that soldiers may be willing to deploy when they perceive that the organisational climate to be conducive to their needs. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that there will be a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy ( $H_{12}$ ).

No research study was found that have explored that relationship between trust and willingness to deploy. However, Bahrami, Barati, Ghoroghchian, Montazer-Alfaraj, and Ezzatabadi (2016) found that trust increases positive employee attitudes. In addition, Sweeney (2010) found that trust is an important contributor to followers' willingness to follow the leader's vision. Along the same line Engelbrecht et al. (2014) found that when employees have trust in their leader, they tend to believe that the leader will have their best interest at heart when making decisions. These findings suggests that when soldiers may be willing to follow a leader they trust, which implies that they may be willing to deploy with leaders they trust. Bishop and Ross (2018) found that risk and trust are positively corrected in that there the higher the level of risk the greater the trust. This suggest that if followers trust their leader

they should be willing to take the risk to deploy with that leader even if death is possible. Therefore, it is predicted that there is a significant positive relationship between trust and willingness to deploy ( $H_{13}$ ).

After a review of theoretical and empirical literature on the relationship between the variables of interest it therefore seems reasonable to predict that when followers have positive perceptions of leadership behaviour and organisational climate, it will increase trust in their leader and organisation, which in turn will have positive influence on their willingness to deploy. This study proposes the following conceptual framework, illustrated in Figure 2.9.



**Figure 2.9: Conceptual model of psychosocial factors that influence willingness to deploy**

## 2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a theoretical framework based on previous studies. Emphasis was placed on how leadership behaviour, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy variables are conceptualised and how they relate to one another. The discussion first focused on the SANDF deployment experience and explained the reasons for deployments. The chapter then focused on deployment

challenges. The argument put forth was that the military is characterised by vulnerability, risks, interdependency, and unpredictability.

Followers depend on military leaders not only for successful deployment but also for psychological and emotional wellbeing. This led to the proposition that trust in leaders is critical for attitudinal outcomes such as followers determining their willingness to participate in deployments. The importance of willingness to deploy was highlighted as being necessary for encouraging extra effort towards deployment tasks and developing a positive mind-set that can act as a combat stressor buffer. Based on the various arguments and findings from previous studies, an integrated conceptual model was developed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The literature review that was conducted in Chapter 2 forms the theoretical basis for the hypotheses that are defined in this chapter. The main objective of this study was to empirically test whether leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust have an influence on soldiers' willingness to deploy. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), the appropriate research methodology and design should be put in place in order to address a study's research question and hypotheses. This chapter therefore provides an explanation of the research design, sample design, measuring instruments, and statistical analysis of the research. It is important to first discuss the fundamental purpose of research before explaining the research design and methodology of the study.

Saunders et al. (2012) describe research as a scientific method that people undertake in order to find new approaches that will give them answers to specific questions, thereby increasing their knowledge. According to Huysamen (1994), the aim of research is to apply scientific processes and methods to obtain answers regarding specific research questions or phenomena. In other words, research is conducted to make sense of the world. Babbie (2010) states that there are three purposes of social research, namely description, exploration, and explanation, and that research often combines more than one purpose. To begin with, the descriptive approach focuses on providing an accurate description or picture of a phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Next, the explanatory approach concerns the reporting and discovery of relationships between variables under study and it normally addresses the question "Why?". Lastly, exploratory research is normally conducted when a researcher examines a new interest or when the subject of study is relatively new (Babbie, 2010). This study was exploratory in nature. The lack of empirical research to prove the relationship between leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and willingness to deploy with trust as a mediator served as a standing point to employ an exploratory study.

Research normally consists of a sequence of steps, namely formulating the research problem, designing a research plan, collecting data, and analysing and interpreting

the results (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010). Research design is the general plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the valid empirical research. The research methodology articulates methods, procedures, and techniques that will be used to collect and analyse the research data in order to address the research questions and research problem (Lance & Vandenberg, 2014).

Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that research can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both. Qualitative research is a “non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships” (Babbie, 2010, p. 394). Qualitative research often gathers data from a relatively small sample, can provide a “micro” view of the phenomenon being investigated, and is usually subjective (Marczyk, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2005). Contrary to this, quantitative research emphasises variable analysis, which allows the quantification of constructs through quantitative measurement and describing and analysing human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This study took on a quantitative research approach because it is appropriate for research where systematic and standardised comparisons are needed, and it is objective in nature. In addition, this approach is cost effective and less time consuming compared to the qualitative approach. For this study, the researcher observed the impact of leadership behaviour and organisational climate on willingness to deploy, with trust as a mediating variable.

### **3.2 HYPHOTHESES**

The literature review in Chapter 2 emphasised the commitment of South Africa to contribute to peace resolutions and conflict management on the African continent. This commitment requires South African soldiers to volunteer to deploy. The nature of military deployments demands soldiers to have the “willingness factor” in order to perform effectively and cope with deployment challenges. The stated theoretical research objectives (see Section 1.3.1) for the study were to conceptualise willingness to deploy, leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust from a theoretical perspective, and to determine the theoretical relationships between these constructs. The theoretical background and framework in Chapter 2 led to the formulation of the theoretical model (see Figure 1.1).

Based on the theoretical background provided in Chapter 2, the following hypotheses were formulated:

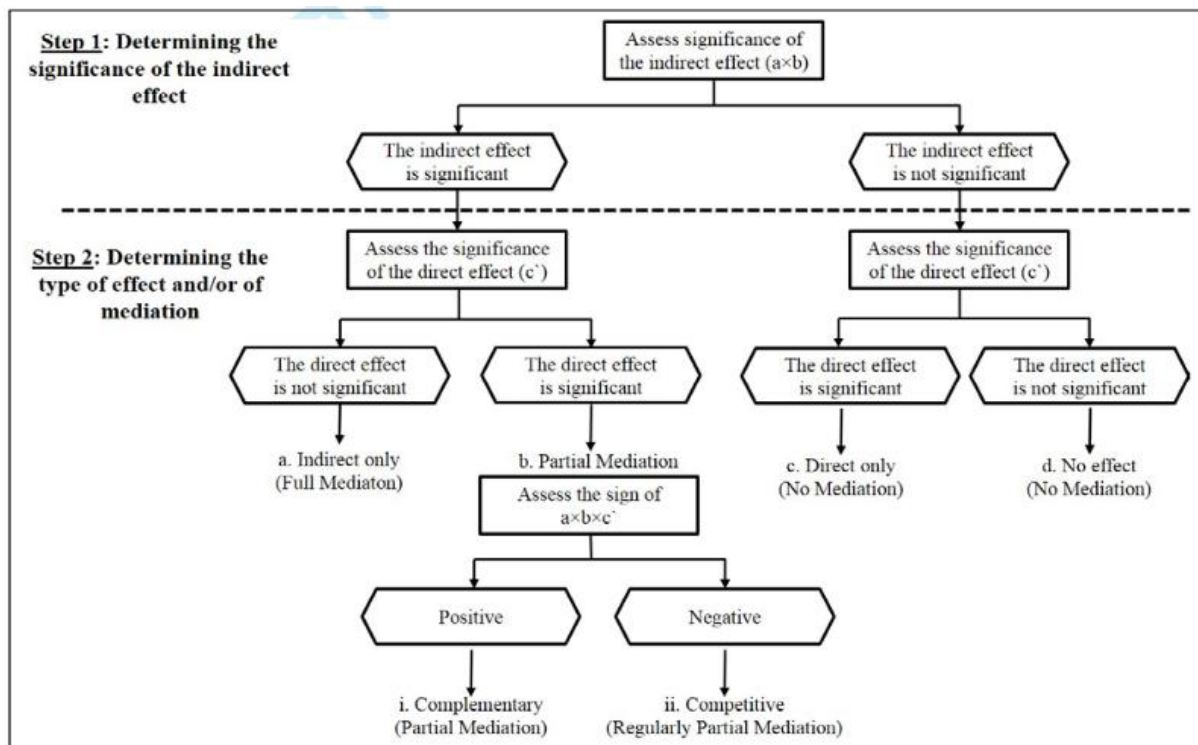
- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust.
- H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust.
- H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust.
- H<sub>7</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and overall trust.
- H<sub>8</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and trust in a leader.
- H<sub>9</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational trust.
- H<sub>10</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and overall trust.
- H<sub>11</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy.
- H<sub>12</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy.
- H<sub>13</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between trust and willingness to deploy.
- H<sub>14</sub>: Trust mediates the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy.
- H<sub>15</sub>: Trust mediates the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy.



### 3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to the strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of research (Babbie, 2010). This study followed a non-experimental research design to explore the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Marczyk et al. (2005) describe a dependent variable as a construct whose value depends on the interaction with other variables (independent variables). The said variable for this study was willingness to deploy. An independent variable is a construct whose value does not depend on other variable(s); meaning it is a variable that causes an effect on the dependent variable. The independent variables for this study were organisational climate and leadership behaviour.

As the mediating variable, trust is assumed to explain the relationship between the independent variables (leadership behaviour and organisational climate) and dependent variable (willingness to deploy). According to Zhao, Lynch, and Chen (2010), full mediation effect can be claimed when the independent variable significantly affects the intervening variable, which then predicts the dependent variable. This means that full mediation concerns the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable with the help of the mediating variable. Partial mediation can be claimed when the independent variable predicts the intervening variable and when there is also a direct relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. In short, both the direct and indirect effects of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable are significant (Prof. M. Kidd, personal communication, October 21, 2019; Zhao et al., 2010). Figure 3.1 provides an illustration of mediation analysis.



**Figure 3.1: Mediator analysis procedure in partial least squares (PLS)**

(Zhao et al., 2010)

The study followed the quantitative method. This scientific approach focuses on the analysis of the variables of interest using statistical analysis without any influence or manipulation from the researcher. This study was exploratory in nature with the aim of indicating how the chosen variables relate to one another.

### 3.4 SAMPLING DESIGN

A population is described as the group being studied and from which conclusions will be drawn (Barnard, 2010). The population of the study was SANDF soldiers assigned to operational (deploying) units. Participating units were the 9 South African Infantry (SAI) Battalion (Bn) located in Cape Town and 4 SAI Bn located in Mpumalanga. The reason for the selection of these two units is because they fall under the SA Army and they are continuously involved in external and internal deployments. The other three arms of services – the SAAF, SAN, and SAMHS – are used in supporting roles and they deploy a small number of members. The sample comprised privates, NCOs, Warrant Officers, and Officers rank groups. Both males and females across different races were part of the study. Other biographical

information of the sample presented in the descriptive statistical section includes field of utilisation and marital status (see Section 4.2). Non-probability and convenient sampling techniques were used. A convenient sampling method refers to participants who are available and willing to participate in a study (Lance & Vandenberg, 2014). A sample of 98 participants was made from 9 SAI Bn (n=98) and 106 from 4 SAI Bn (n=106). A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed to 9 SAI Bn, and 98 were returned and completed. This represents an 82% response rate. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed to 4 SAI Bn, of which 106 were returned and completed. This also represents an 82% response rate. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed and 206 were returned and completed, which represents an 82% response rate.

### **3.5 DATA-COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

This study, being conducted within the military environment, required obtaining the relevant permission from the South African Infantry Formation and Defence Intelligence Division within the SANDF. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Stellenbosch University's Ethics Committee. Participants were invited to participate in the study in their respective locations on different dates. The potential participants were given a consent form, and the purpose and instructions of research were explained to them. It was explained that participation in the study was voluntary and that withdrawal at any time would be accepted without any negative consequences. The participants were given an opportunity to sign the consent form.

Once the participants gave their consent, their questionnaires were distributed. It took 45 to 55 minutes to complete the questionnaires utilising the pen-and-paper method. Once completed, the questionnaires were checked for completeness to ascertain that each item was responded to. In conducting this study, no physical or psychological harm was intended to incur to the participants. To ensure this, all ethical requirements were adhered to according to Stellenbosch University's Ethical Code. The confidentiality of the participants was respected and maintained, and this was also outlined on the consent forms that each participant completed prior to their commencement of the study. The anonymity of the participants was ensured throughout the study. It took a day to collect data at 9 SAI Bn and two days at 4 SAI Bn.

## **3.6 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS**

The survey consisted of two sections, namely Section A and Section B. Section A focused on the biographical information of the participants. This included information pertaining to the participants' age, gender, population group, rank group, field of utilisation, and marital status. Section B focused on the various measuring instruments. Existing measuring scales were used.

### **3.6.1 Willingness to deploy**

Willingness to deploy was measured with the WDQ as adapted by Nkewu (2014) from Bester and Stanz's (2007) PSOQ subtest. The scale consists of 12 items. A five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 = Will never volunteer to 5 = Will always volunteer. A study that was conducted within the SANDF reported a reliability coefficient of .91 (Nkewu, 2014).

### **3.6.2 Leadership behaviour**

The MLQ form 6x was used to measure transactional and transformational leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1992). Transformational leadership style was measured utilising four dimensions, namely idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. Transactional leadership style was measured using three dimensions, namely contingent reward, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. The questionnaire consisted of 21 items, each using a modified five-point Likert scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Fairly open, and 5 = Frequently. The participating soldiers were asked to rate the leader to whom they report, meaning their immediate commander. The validity and reliability of the MLQ has been empirically established in the South African context, with the reliability coefficient ranging from .87 to .90 (Grundlingh, 2012).

### **3.6.3 Organisational climate**

Organisational climate was measured using the OCM (Patterson et al., 2005). The scale measures 17 dimensions that are organised in four domains, namely human relations, internal process, open systems, and rational goal (see Table 2.1).

However, for the relevance of this study, only 15 dimensions were measured. The outward focus dimension under the open system quadrant and efficiency under the rational goal quadrant were not considered. The questionnaire consisted of 73 items, each using a five-point Likert scale with response options from 1 = Definitely false to 5 = Definitely true. The Cronbach's alpha ranged from .67 to .91 (Patterson et al., 2005; Banda, 2019).

#### **3.6.4 Trust**

The WTS by Ferres and Travaglione (2003) was utilised to measure the aspect of trust in organisations and trust in a leader. The original scale measures three dimensions of trust, namely 11 items that measure trust in the organisation, nine items that measure trust in a leader (personal trust), and 12 items that measure trust in co-workers. However, for the relevancy of this study, only trust in a leader and trust in the organisation were considered. The alpha coefficient ranges from .90 to .97 (Ferres, 2001; Van Staden, 2007).

### **3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Babbie, 2010). The three types of validity are content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity. Firstly, content validity refers to the degree to which items on a measurement scale reflect all facets of a construct (Barnard, 2010). Secondly, criterion validity concerns the degree to which a measurement scale is related to an outcome. Lastly, construct validity reflects the degree to which the measurement scale measures what it claims to measure (Ghulami, Hamid, & Zakaria, 2014). In ensuring construct validity, two subtypes of construct validity were performed, namely convergent validity and discriminant validity. On the one hand, convergent validity refers to the extent to which measurements scales that should be related are in fact related (Hulland, 1999). On the other hand, discriminant validity analysis evaluates whether measurement scales that are not supposed to be related, are indeed unrelated (Ghulami et al., 2014).

Reliability refers to the extent to which a given measurement will repeatedly yield similar results under similar conditions at various points in time (Barnard, 2010). The relatedness of all items on a test is known as internal-consistency reliability. In ensuring reliability and validity, the study utilised established instruments to ensure a structured and systematic approach.

### **3.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The data were captured in Microsoft Excel, which was password protected. Statistical analysis was conducted using Statistica 13.5. Descriptive analysis and dimensionality analysis were computed to provide an overview of the sample and responses of different factors. To determine the reliability of the different measuring scales, reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the constructs. Partial least squares (PLS) analysis was computed using the SmartPLS 3 to test the proposed model of the study (see Figure 2.9).

### **3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter was to explain and justify the research design and methodology that were used for this study. From a methodological perspective, this study followed a quantitative research method that was exploratory in nature. The target population was uniformed SANDF members, of which the sample was drawn from two infantry units, namely 4 SAI Bn and 9 SAI Bn. Using the convenient sampling technique, 206 participants were drawn from the population. The chapter also discussed how data were analysed and interpreted. The next chapter discusses the research findings.

## **CHAPTER 4**

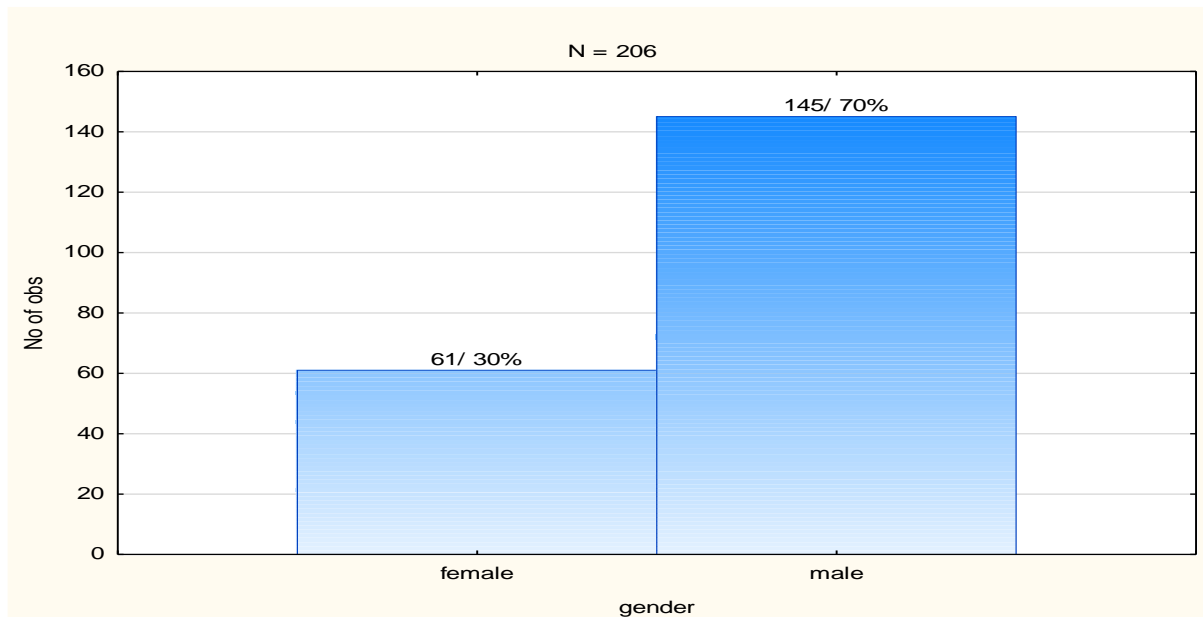
### **RESEARCH RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 3 outlined the various research methods and procedures that were used to conduct this study. This chapter presents various statistical analyses based on the data that were collected. The results are reported as a combination of the two units (4 SAI Bn and 9 SAI Bn) from which the data were collected. The results are presented in four sections, namely descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, inferential statistics, and PLS-SEM, which provides the measurement and structural model results. The results of the inferential statistics include a report on observed correlations between the variables of the study as hypothesised (see Section 3.2) by using Pearson's correlation coefficient, followed by PLS analysis to obtain structural model results. The analysis of the study was undertaken using Statistica 13.5 and SmartPLS 3.

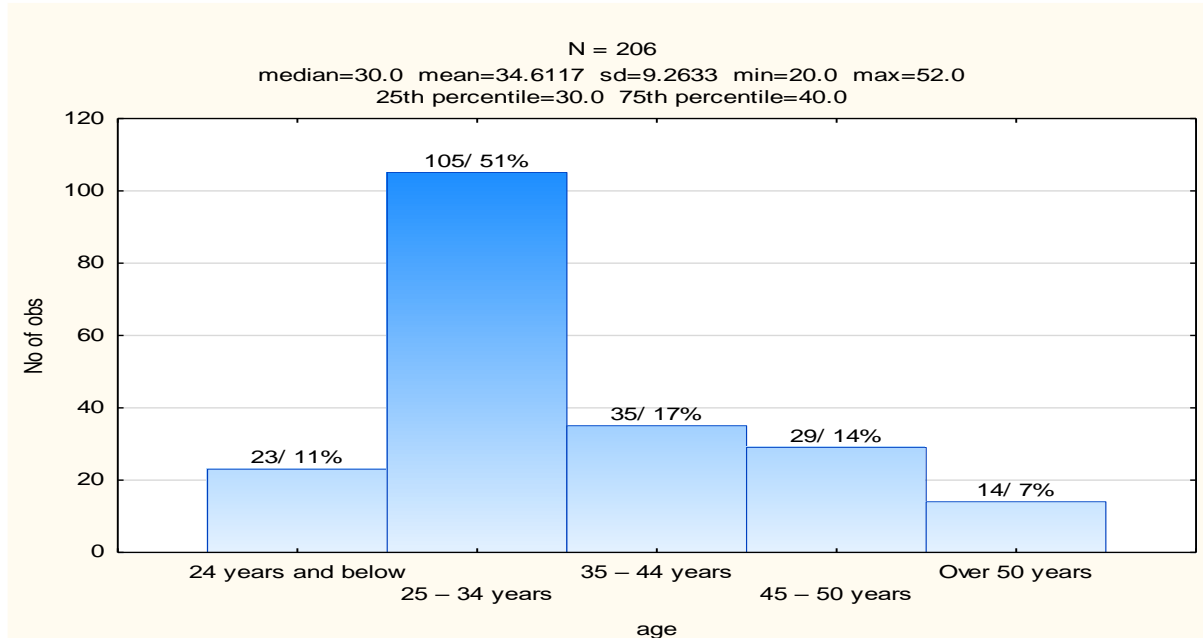
#### **4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

According to Field (2009), descriptive statistics are computed to provide a summary of the sample and to make the raw data that were collected understandable. Marczyk et al. (2005) add that descriptive statistics allow for quick and accurate description of a large dataset. The authors further suggest that the most commonly employed descriptive analysis is measures of central tendency. Measures of central tendency provide researchers with a way of characterising a dataset with a single value. The most widely used measures of central tendency are the mean, median, and mode. The central tendency of a distribution is a number that represents the typical or most representative value in a distribution. The sample comprised 206 military personnel of the SANDF. A summary of the biographical information of the sample is represented by various histograms, as follows.



**Figure 4.1: Histogram of gender**

Of the 206 participants in this study, the majority (145; 70%) were males and 61 (30%) were females (see Figure 4.1). This means that the sample consisted predominantly of males.

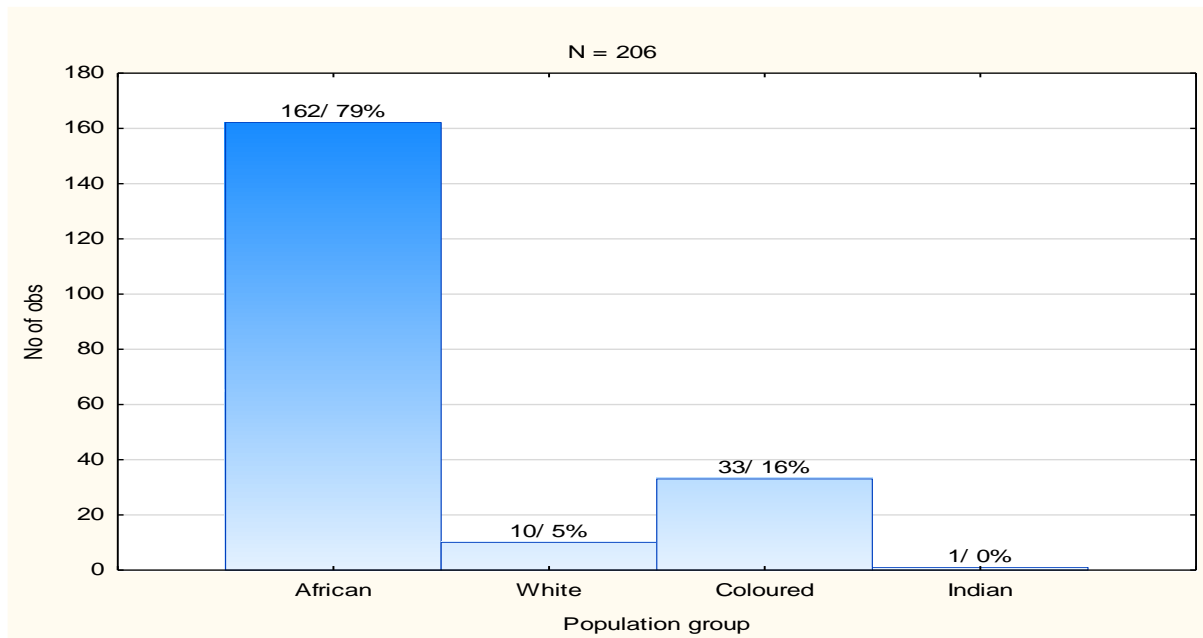


**Figure 4.2: Histogram of age**

The participants represented different age groups, ranging from 24 years and below to over 50 years of age (see Figure 4.2). The majority of the participants were in the age group 25 to 34 years, which comprised 105 (51%) participants of the study

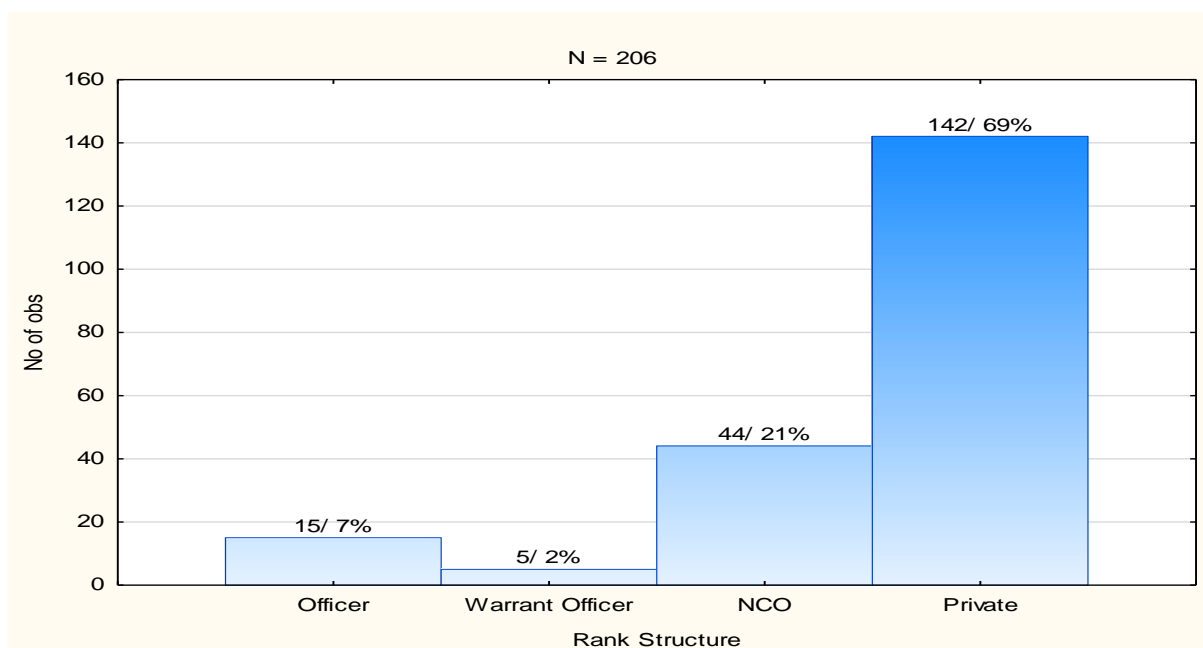


sample. The smallest group category was that of over 50 years, with only 14 (7%) participants in the group. In the 35 to 44 age group, there were 35 (35%) participants; in the 45 to 50 group, there were 29 (14%) participants; and in the 24 years and below group, there were 23 (11%) participants.



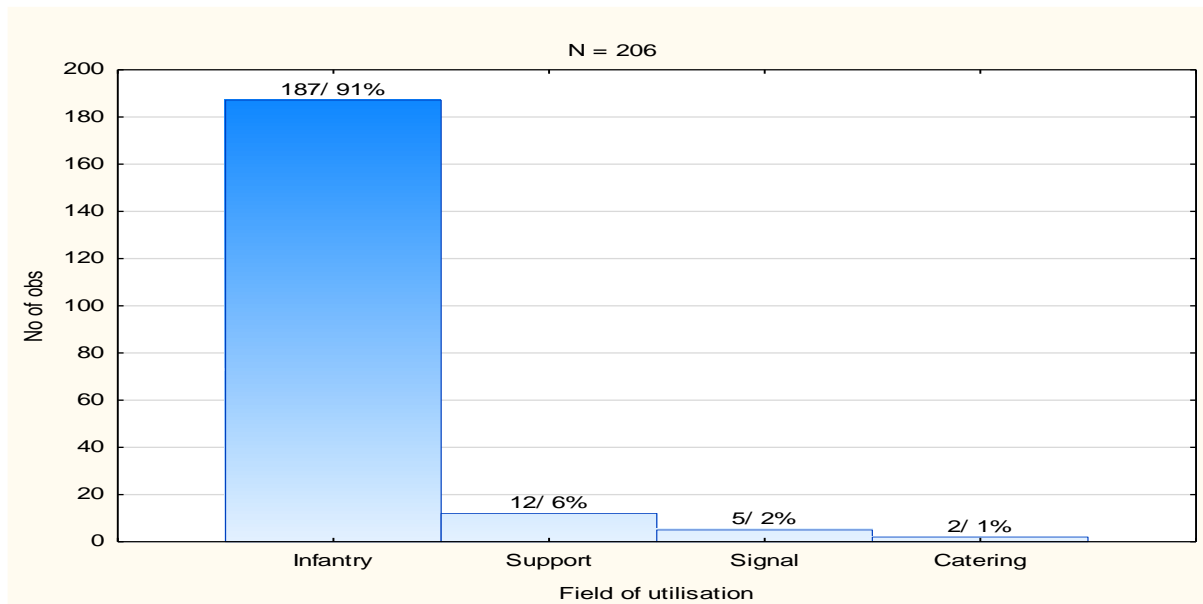
**Figure 4.3: Histogram of population group**

The majority of the participants were African, comprising 162 (79%) participants, followed by coloured, with 33 (16%), white with 10 (5%), and Indian with 1 (0.1%).



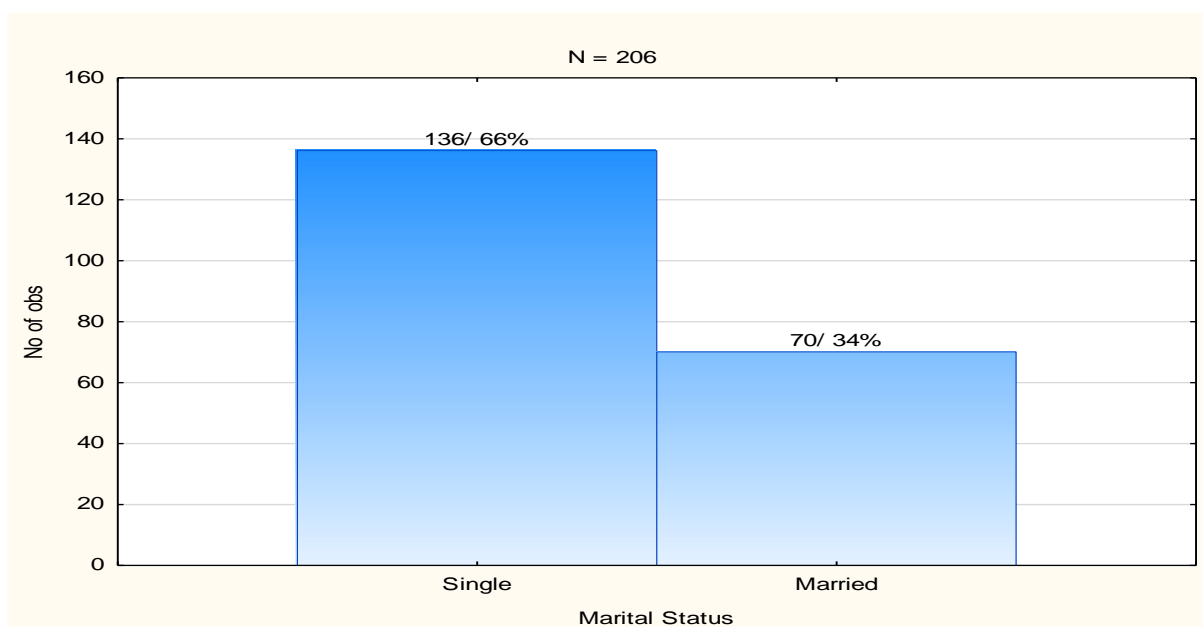
**Figure 4.4: Histogram of rank structure**

The participants were categorised according to rank groups (see Figure 4.4). The majority (142; 69%) of the sample were privates, followed by NCOs (44; 21%). Officers comprised 15 (7%) participants, and the smallest group comprised warrant officers (5; 1%).



**Figure 4.5: Histogram of field of utilisation**

Figure 4.5 illustrates the representation of the field of utilisation of the sample. The majority (187; 91%) of the participants were from the infantry corps, followed by 12 (6%) support members, five (2%) signal members, and two (1%) catering members.



**Figure 4.6: Histogram of marital status**

According to Figure 4.6, most participants were single, consisting of 136 (66%) of the sample, and 70 (34%) were married.

The next section outlines the measures of central tendency, which are normally used to determine the typical score attained by a sample (Howell, 2009).

**Table 4.1: Measures of central tendency**

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation (SD)
Trust	206	1.22	5.0	3.46	.82
Organisational climate	206	1.87	4.42	3.31	.50
Leadership behaviour	206	1.0	5.0	3.32	.75
Willingness to deploy	206	1.0	5.0	3.87	.71

An overview of the measures of central tendency is provided in Table 4.1. The results reflect a maximum of 5 and a minimum of 1.22, with a mean of 3.46, and an SD of .82, indicating that participants had above-average levels of trust. The OCM had a maximum score of 4.42, a mean of 3.31, and an SD of .50, which indicate that participants had high moderate levels for organisational climate. The MLQ had a maximum score of 5.0, a mean of 3.32, and an SD of .75, which indicate that the participants were in agreement with the leadership that exists in their unit. The maximum score of 5.0, mean of 3.87, and SD of .71 indicate that participants had above-average levels of willingness to deploy.

### 4.3 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

According to Field (2009), one way of ensuring minimum measurement errors is ensuring the measuring instrument's reliability. The measuring instruments that were selected to measure the variables of interest for this study (trust, organisational climate, leadership, and willingness to deploy) were reported as having a reliable Cronbach's alpha in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.6) based on previous studies. In corroboration, this study also found the scales to be reliable (see Table 4.2). Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of reliability. Reliability analysis refers to the extent to which a measure is consistent in its measurements across different situations (Pallant, 2007).

Scales and subscales that obtain a Cronbach's alpha greater than .70 are considered acceptable (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2007). However, Pallant (2007) suggests that scales or subscales that have fewer than ten items tend to have a Cronbach's alpha lower than .50. Item analysis was computed to test the internal reliability of the scales. Internal reliability reflects the extent to which items of the scale measure the same construct. The aim of the item analysis was to assess the items that did not contribute to the internal consistency of the scale as elimination of those items would result in a higher Cronbach's alpha. The following results were obtained:

- Item 1 in the organisational trust subscale of the WTS was flagged as a possible poor item. This is because deleting it would increase the Cronbach's alpha from .92 to .93, which is negligible. The decision was made to not delete this item.
- Items 24, 26, 52, and 57 in the OCM scale were flagged as poor items and deletion of these items would increase the Cronbach's alpha. The possible reason for these items reflecting poorly could be because they were negative items; they were therefore required to be reversed. However, a decision was made to retain these items for further analysis.
- Only item 13 of the MLQ would improve the scale if deleted; however, a decision was made to retain the item for further analysis.

Table 4.2 provides the internal reliability of the scales and subscales that were examined for the sample of this study.

**Table 4.2: Internal reliability of the scales and subscales**

<b>Subscales</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
<b>OCM</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>.88</b>
Autonomy	206	.73
Integration	206	.60
Involvement	206	.71
Supervisory support	206	.91
Training	206	.68
Welfare	206	.80
Formalisation	206	.54
Tradition	206	.70
Innovation and flexibility	206	.87
Reflexivity	206	.87
Clarity of organisational goals	206	.82
Performance feedback	206	.61

<b>Subscales</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
Pressure to produce	206	.61
Quality	206	.87
<b>MLQ</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>.94</b>
Transformational leadership	206	.89
Transactional leadership	206	.89
<b>WTS</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>.90</b>
Organisational trust	206	.92
Trust in leader	206	.94
<b>WDQ</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>.90</b>

The results of the internal reliability of the subscales as presented in Table 4.2 indicate that the scales obtained significant reliability coefficients, ranging from .88 to .94. The subscales of the OCM used to measure organisational climate yielded reasonable reliability coefficients, ranging from .54 to .91. Although the formalisation subscale yielded a lower Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha=.54$ ), it was decided to retain the subscales for further statistical analysis. The MLQ subscales both obtained acceptable reliability coefficients ( $\alpha=.89$ ). The WTS subscales also obtained acceptable Cronbach's alphas, .92 and .94 respectively. The WDQ obtained an acceptable Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha=.90$ ).

#### **4.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS**

Inferential statistics allow researchers to draw conclusions from existing data. According to Field (2009), inferential statistics help researchers reject or confirm their hypotheses.

##### **4.4.1 Correlation analysis**

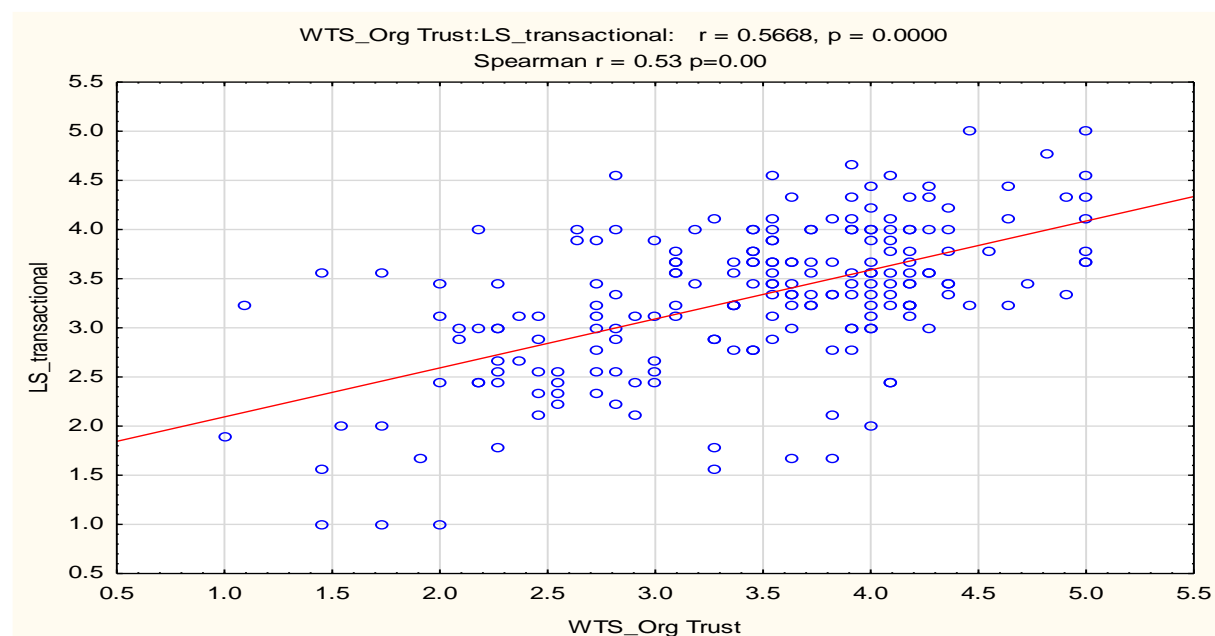
This section of the study focuses on reviewing the results of the correlations as hypothesised in Chapter 2 (see Figure 2.9) and Chapter 3 (see Section 3.2). Correlations indicate the direction (positive or negative) and the strength of the relationship between variables. Correlations below .20 are regarded as negligible, .20 to .39 are regarded as low, .40 to .59 are regarded as moderate, .60 to .79 as moderately high, and .80 to 1.00 are regarded as high (Pallant, 2007; Field, 2009). Table 4.3 indicates the Pearson's correlation results that were obtained.

**Table 4.3: Pearson's correlations between the variables of interest**

From variable	To variable	Pearson's r	p-value
Leadership behaviour	Overall Trust	.66	.01
Transactional leadership	Org Trust	.57	.01
Transactional leadership	TIL	.59	.01
Transformational leadership	Org Trust	.62	.01
Transformational leadership	TIL	.65	.01
Transactional leadership	Overall Trust	.62	.01
Transformational leadership	Overall Trust	.67	.01
Organisational climate	Overall Trust	.60	.01
Organisational climate	Org Trust	.59	.01
Organisational climate	TIL	.54	.01
Leadership behaviour	WD	.49	.01
Organisational climate	WD	.41	.01
Trust	WD	.49	.01

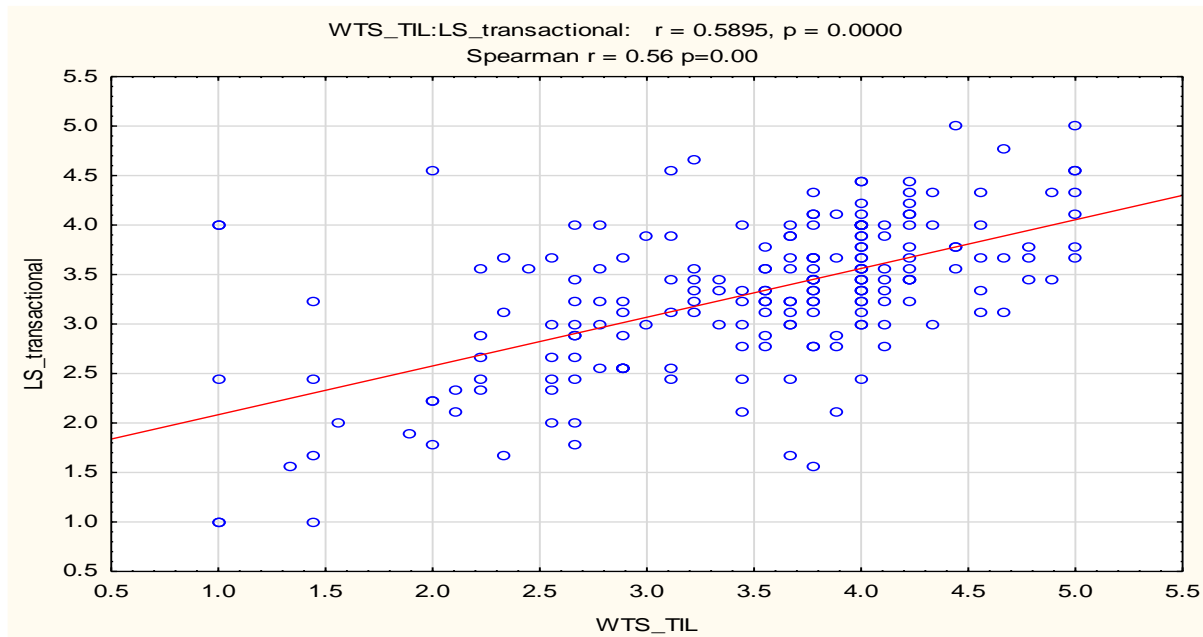
A summary of the correlation results between variables is provided in Table 4.3. These results are used to answer some of the hypotheses that were formulated in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.2). The following scatter plots provide a graphic view of the relationships between the variables.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust.

**Figure 4.7: Scatter plot of transactional leadership and organisational trust**

The correlation results in Table 4.3 show a moderately significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust ( $r=.57$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Figure 4.7). Based on the results,  $H_1$  was accepted.

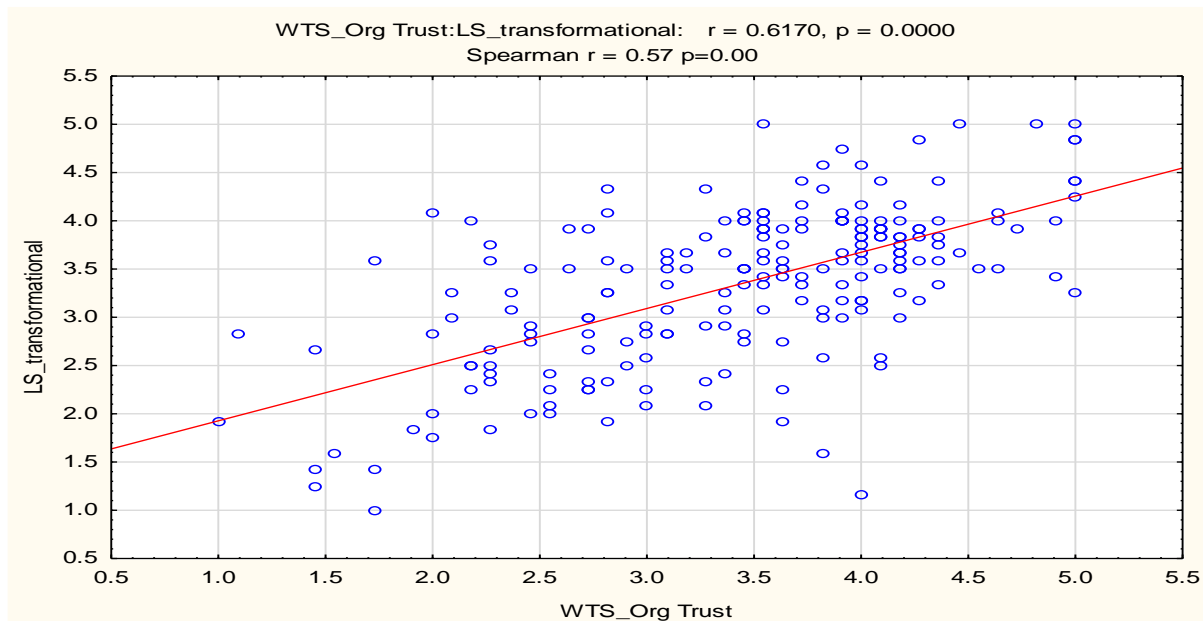
$H_2$ : There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader.



**Figure 4.8: Scatter plot of transactional leadership and trust in a leader**

The results in Figure 4.8 show a moderately significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader ( $r=.59$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_2$  was accepted.

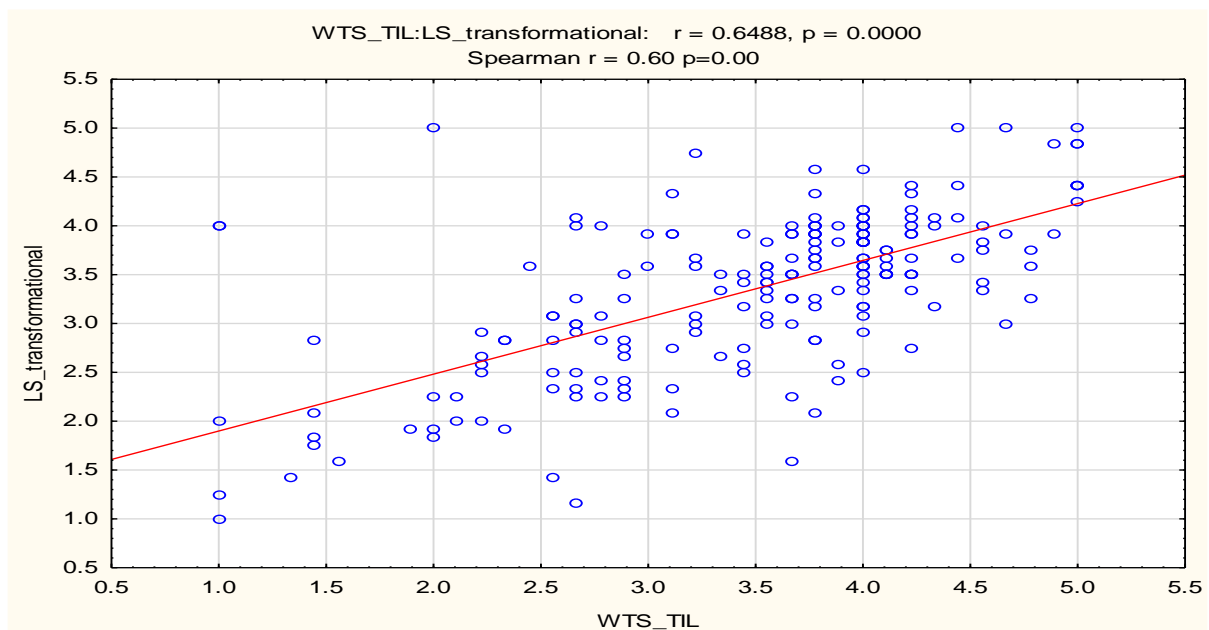
H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust.



**Figure 4.9: Scatter plot of transformational leadership and organisational trust**

The results in Figure 4.9 show a moderately significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust ( $r=.62$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results, H<sub>3</sub> was accepted.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader.

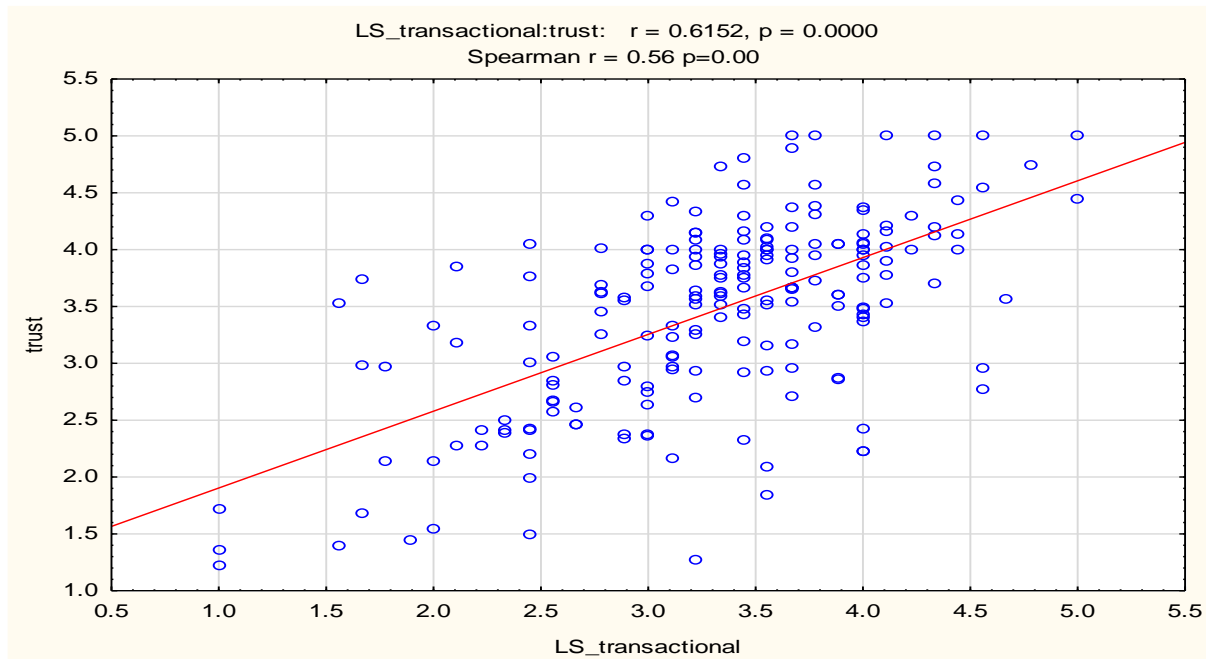


**Figure 4.10: Scatter plot of transformational leadership and trust in a leader**



The results in Figure 4.10 show a moderately high significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader ( $r=.65$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_4$  was accepted.

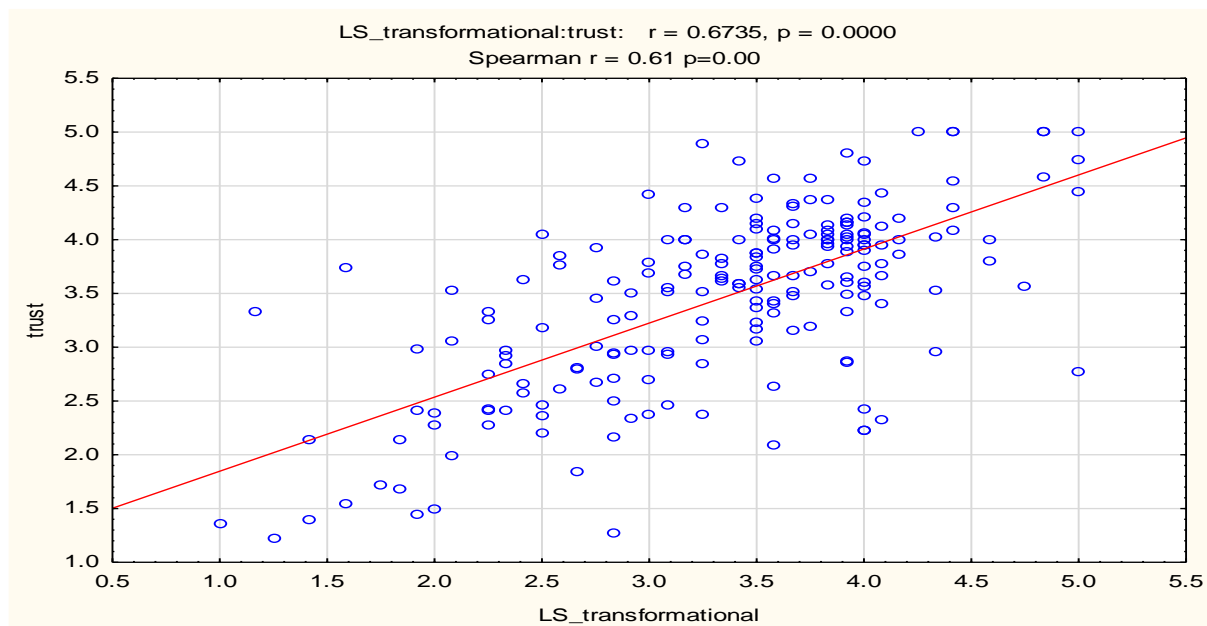
$H_5$ : There is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust.



**Figure 4.11: Scatter plot of transactional leadership and overall trust**

The results in Figure 4.11 show a moderately significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust ( $r=.62$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_5$  was accepted.

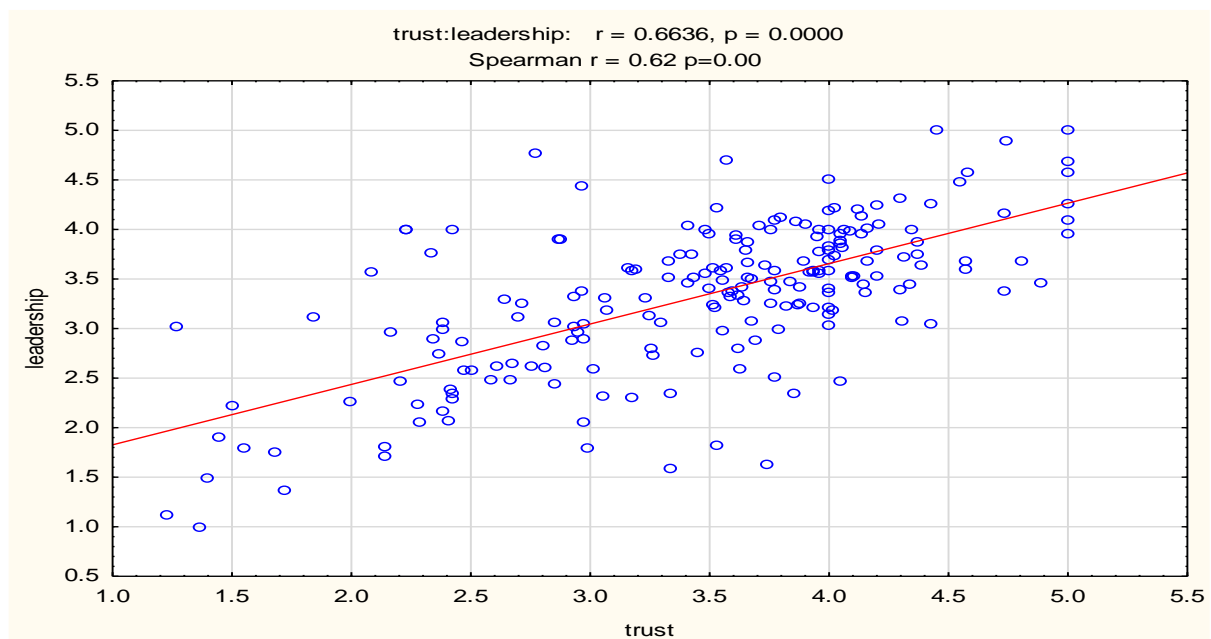
H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust.



**Figure 4.12: Scatter plot of transformational leadership and overall trust**

The results in Figure 4.12 show a moderately high significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust ( $r=.67$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results, H<sub>6</sub> was accepted.

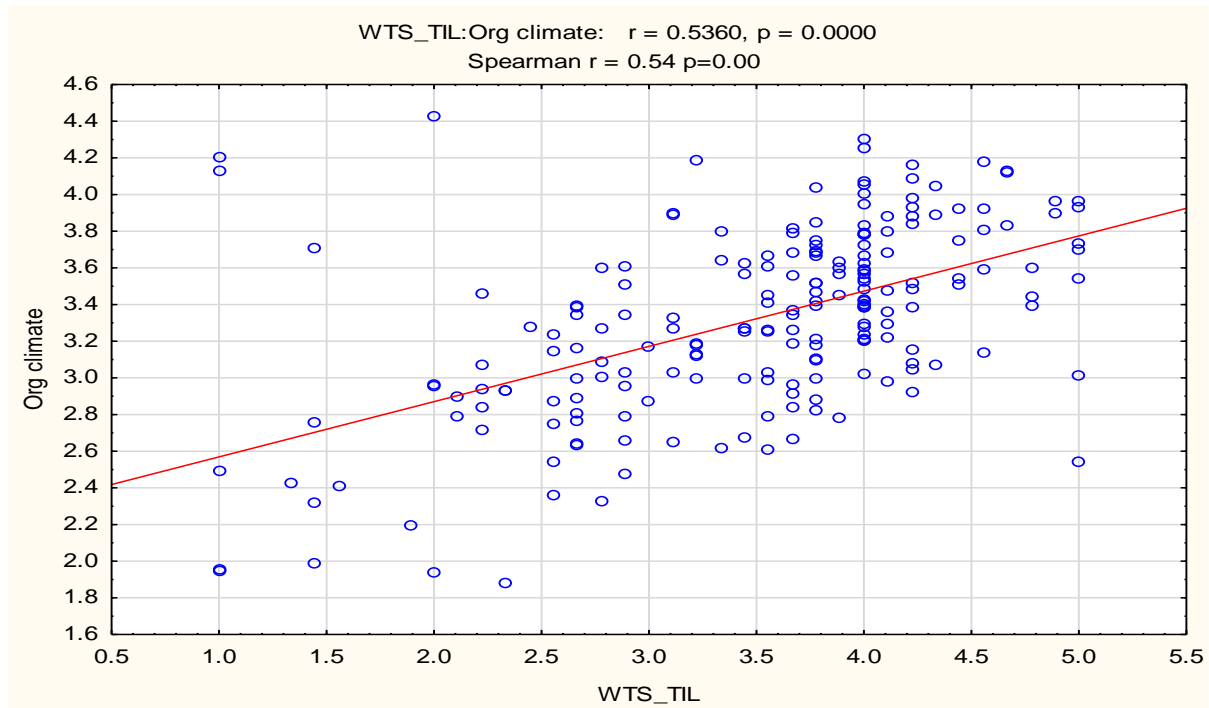
H<sub>7</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and overall trust.



**Figure 4.13: Scatter plot of leadership behaviour and overall trust**

The results in Figure 4.13 show a moderately high significant positive relationship between leadership and overall trust ( $r=.66$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_7$  was accepted.

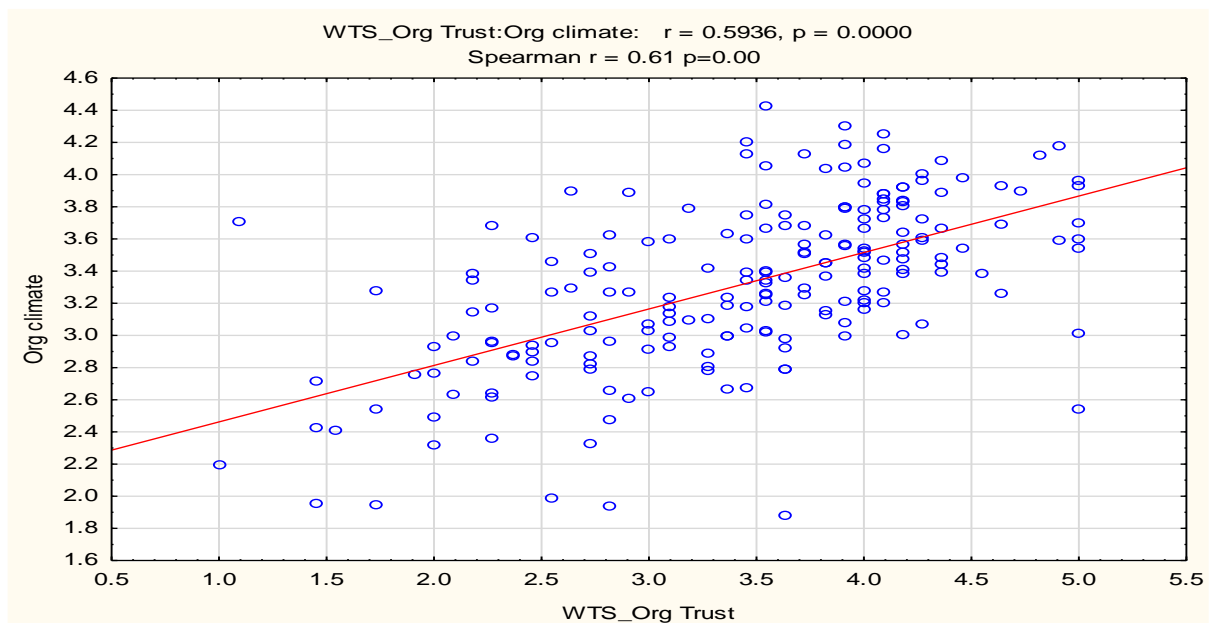
$H_8$ : There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and trust in a leader.



**Figure 4.14: Scatter plot of organisational climate and trust in a leader**

The results in Figure 4.14 show a moderately significant positive relationship between organisational climate and trust in a leader ( $r=.54$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_8$  was accepted.

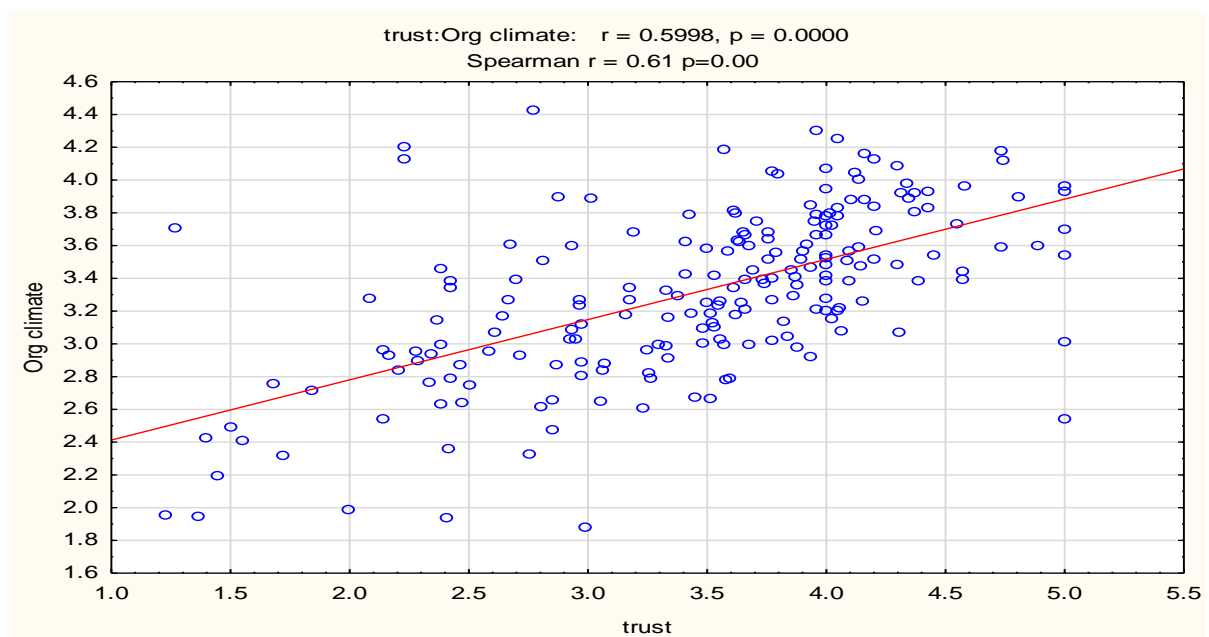
H<sub>9</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational trust.



**Figure 4.15: Scatter plot of organisational climate and organisational trust**

The results in Figure 4.15 show a moderately significant positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational trust ( $r=0.59$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results, H<sub>9</sub> was accepted.

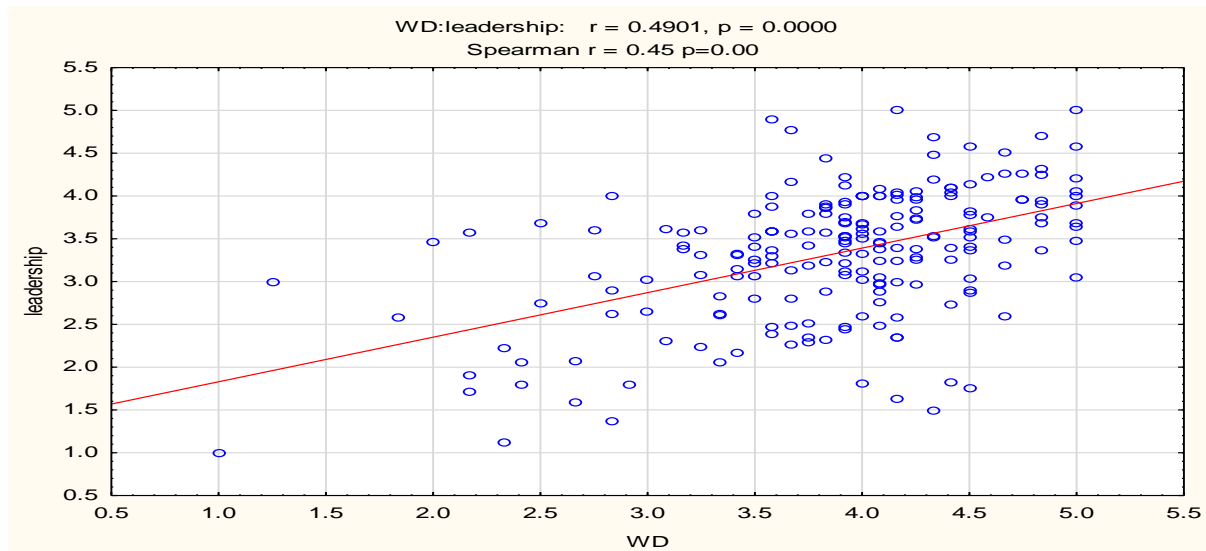
H<sub>10</sub>: There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and overall trust.



**Figure 4.16: Scatter plot of organisational climate and overall trust**

The results in Figure 4.16 show a moderately high significant positive relationship between organisational climate and overall trust ( $r=.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_{10}$  was accepted.

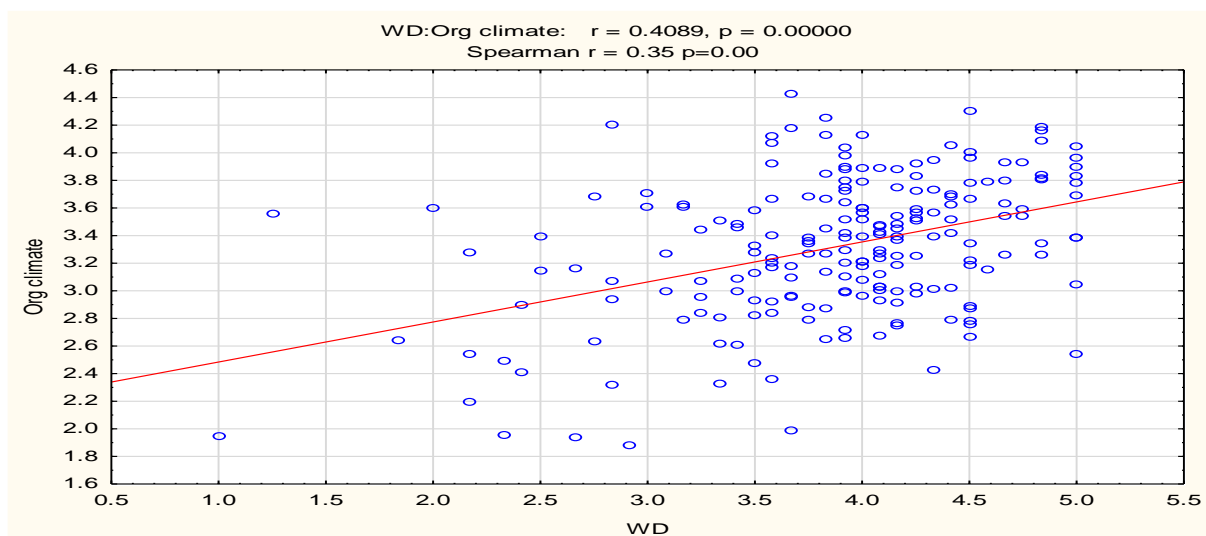
$H_{11}$ : There is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy.



**Figure 4.17: Scatter plot of leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy**

The results in Figure 4.17 show a moderately significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy ( $r=.49$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_{11}$  was accepted.

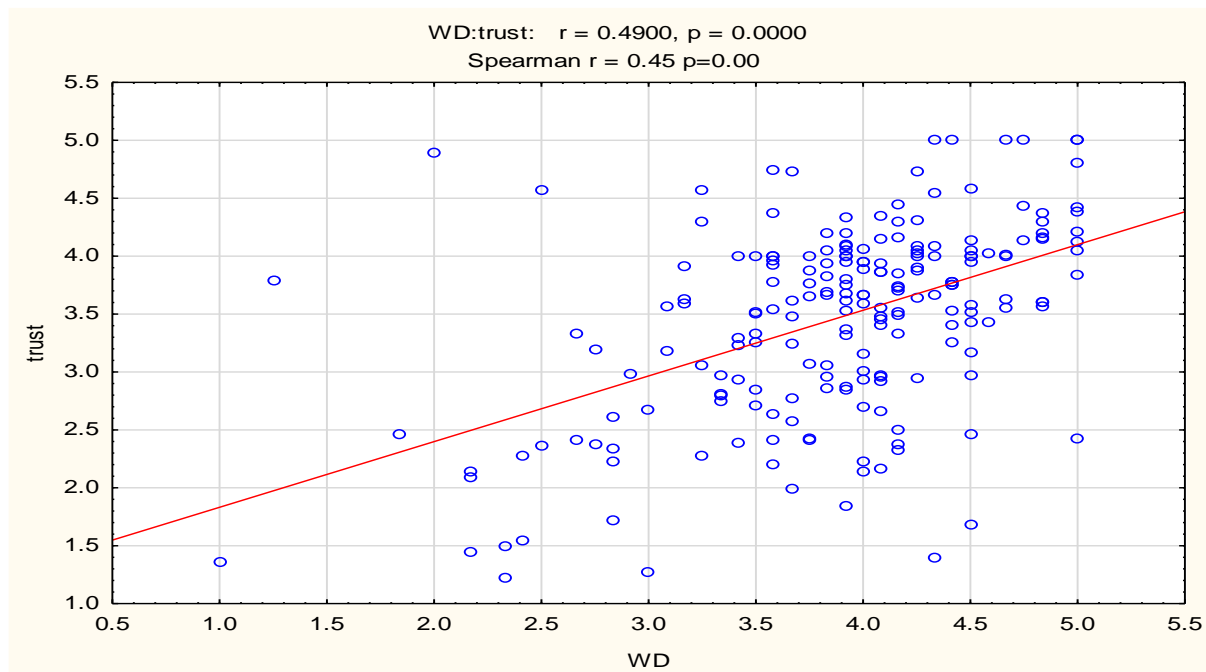
$H_{12}$ : There is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy.



**Figure 4.18: Scatter plot of organisational climate and willingness to deploy**

The results in Figure 4.18 show a low significant positive relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy ( $r=.41$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_{12}$  was accepted.

$H_{13}$ : There is a significant positive relationship between trust and willingness to deploy.



**Figure 4.19: Scatter plot of trust and willingness to deploy**

The results in Figure 4.19 show a moderately high significant positive relationship between trust and willingness to deploy ( $r=.49$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) (see Table 4.3). Based on the results,  $H_{13}$  was accepted.

#### **4.5 PARTIAL LEAST SQUARES STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (PLS-SEM)**

PLS-SEM was used to test the influence of leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust in soldiers' willingness to deploy. PLS-SEM is component based and is used to maximise prediction, while covariance-based structural equation modelling is used to maximise model fit (Sawatsky, Clyde, & Meek, 2015). PLS-SEM consists of two parts, namely a structural model (inner model) and a measurement model (outer model). The relationship (path coefficient) between the independent and dependent variable is specified by the structural

model, whereas the relationship between the latent variable with their observed indicators is specified by the measurement model (Wong, 2013).

PLS-SEM was used to test the proposed model (see Figure 2.9). PLS is especially useful when a study has a small sample; for example, with 100 to 200 participants (Wong, 2013) and when a study is exploratory in nature. This study evaluated the structural model in a two-step approach. The first part of evaluating the model is assessing the measurement model. The aim of assessing the measurement model is to ensure that the measuring instruments determine the variables that they are supposed to measure and simultaneously ensuring that the measuring instruments are reliable.

Composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated to determine the model's reliability and validity. Hulland (1999) proposes that the most preferred composite reliability coefficient level should be .70 or higher, and if it is an exploratory study, .60 or higher is acceptable. He further suggests that the convergent validity (AVE) should be .50 or higher.

**Table 4.4: The reliability and validity of the model**

Variables	Composite reliability	AVE
Trust in a leader	.95	.68
Organisational trust	.94	.58
Trust	.96	.56
Organisational climate	.90	.41
Transformational leadership	.95	.83
Transactional leadership	.91	.78
Leadership behaviour	.96	.57
Willingness to deploy	.92	.49

Table 4.4 shows that the composite reliability of all the variables was well established; ranging from .91 to .95. All the variables met the .70 requirement of acceptable composite reliability, ranging from .90 to .95. According to the results displayed in Table 4.4, organisational climate (AVE=.41) and willingness to deploy (AVE=.49) failed to meet the .50 threshold of acceptable convergent validity. Table 4.5 provides the results of the discriminant validity of the scales.

**Table 4.5: Measurement model**

Path	Outer loading	Bootstrap lower	Bootstrap upper	Significant
LS_AMBE<Transactional leadership	0.90	0.86	0.93	Yes
LS_CR<Transactional leadership	0.89	0.85	0.92	Yes
LS_PMBE<Transactional leadership	0.85	0.78	0.89	Yes
LS_II<Transformational leadership	0.91	0.87	0.93	Yes
LS_IM<Transformational leadership	0.92	0.90	0.94	Yes
LS_IS<Transformational leadership	0.91	0.88	0.93	Yes
LS_IndS<Transformational leadership	0.91	0.87	0.94	Yes
OC_Autonomy	0.29	0.11	0.45	Yes
OC_Clarify of organisational goals	0.76	0.67	0.82	Yes
OC_Effort	0.72	0.59	0.80	Yes
OC_Formalisation	0.50	0.35	0.63	Yes
OC_Innovation and flexibility	0.79	0.72	0.85	Yes
OC_Integration	0.58	0.44	0.70	Yes
OC_Involvement	0.66	0.56	0.75	Yes
OC_Feedback	0.64	0.49	0.74	Yes
OC_Pressure to produce	0.28	0.07	0.45	Yes
OC_Quality	0.66	0.54	0.75	Yes
OC_Reflexivity	0.80	0.74	0.86	Yes
OC_Supervisory support	0.82	0.73	0.87	Yes
OC_Tradition	0.19	0	0.36	No
OC_Training	0.68	0.58	0.77	Yes
OC_Welfare	0.78	0.69	0.85	Yes
WD1<Willingness to deploy	0.72	0.60	0.80	Yes
WD2<Willingness to deploy	0.65	0.51	0.74	Yes
WD3<Willingness to deploy	0.62	0.48	0.73	Yes
WD4<Willingness to deploy	0.59	0.43	0.72	Yes
WD5<Willingness to deploy	0.58	0.44	0.69	Yes
WD6<Willingness to deploy	0.63	0.50	0.73	Yes
WD7<Willingness to deploy	0.72	0.61	0.81	Yes
WD8<Willingness to deploy	0.78	0.71	0.84	Yes
WD9<Willingness to deploy	0.73	0.65	0.80	Yes
WD10<Willingness to deploy	0.81	0.74	0.86	Yes
WD11<Willingness to deploy	0.81	0.74	0.86	Yes
WD12<Willingness to deploy	0.74	0.64	0.82	Yes
WTS1<Organisational trust	0.44	0.27	0.57	Yes
WTS2<Organisational trust	0.68	0.57	0.78	Yes
WTS3<Organisational trust	0.74	0.62	0.81	Yes
WTS4<Organisational trust	0.78	0.71	0.83	Yes
WTS5<Organisational trust	0.82	0.76	0.87	Yes
WTS6<Organisational trust	0.84	0.78	0.88	Yes
WTS7<Organisational trust	0.85	0.80	0.89	Yes
WTS8<Organisational trust	0.78	0.70	0.84	Yes
WTS9<Organisational trust	0.81	0.75	0.86	Yes
WTS10<Organisational trust	0.81	0.74	0.86	Yes
WTS11<Organisational trust	0.74	0.66	0.81	Yes
WTS12<Trust in a leader	0.80	0.73	0.86	Yes
WTS13<Trust in a leader	0.78	0.69	0.84	Yes
WTS14<Trust in a leader	0.84	0.77	0.89	Yes
WTS15<Trust in a leader	0.84	0.77	0.90	Yes
WTS16<Trust in a leader	0.86	0.81	0.90	Yes
WTS17<Trust in a leader	0.87	0.82	0.90	Yes
WTS18<Trust in a leader	0.86	0.80	0.91	Yes
WTS19<Trust in a leader	0.74	0.64	0.82	Yes
WTS20<Trust in a leader	0.83	0.77	0.88	Yes

Notes: AMBE = Active by Management by Exception; CR= Contingent Reward; PMBE= Passive by Management by Exception; II= Idealised Influence; IM= Inspirational Motivation; IS= Intellectual Stimulation; Ind S= Individualised Stimulation



Table 4.5 presents the variables that were included in the model. Measurement loadings are represented by standardised path weights that connect the factors to the indicator variable. All factor loadings were significant, except for tradition, which is a dimension of organisational climate. The possible reason for this could be because most items of this dimension were negative items and needed to be reversed.

The second part of the PLS-SEM focused on the structural model results. In order to test whether the independent variables were highly intercorrelated, multicollinearity analysis was conducted. Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated. This makes it difficult to understand the contribution of each independent variable. When the variance inflation factors (VIFs) are higher than 4.0, a problem with multicollinearity is said to exist (Everitt & Hothorn, 2011). It should be noted that transactional leadership and transformational leadership were treated as subscales of leadership behaviour, and organisational trust and trust in a leader as subscales of trust (overall trust) in order to avoid a problem of multicollinearity. Table 4.6 provides a summary of the multicollinearity results that were obtained.

**Table 4.6: Multicollinearity results**

	TIL	Org trust	VIFs			
			TFL	TSL	Trust	WD
Trust in a leader			1	1	1.835	2.275
Leadership behaviour						
Organisational trust						
Organisational climate					1.835	2.004
Transactional leadership						
Transformational leadership	1	1				1.977
Trust						
Willingness to deploy						

According to Table 4.6, the VIF values ranged from 1 to 2.27, indicating no problem of multicollinearity because all values were below the 4.0 threshold. The researcher could therefore carry on with further research analysis.

The second part of PLS-SEM analysis was to analyse the structural model, which was conducted to examine the hypothesised effects of exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables (Wong, 2013). The results that were obtained are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Coefficient of determination of the model**

Variables	R-squared
Trust in a leader	.49
Organisational trust	
Trust	
Organisational climate	.30
Transformational leadership	
Transactional leadership	
Willingness to deploy	

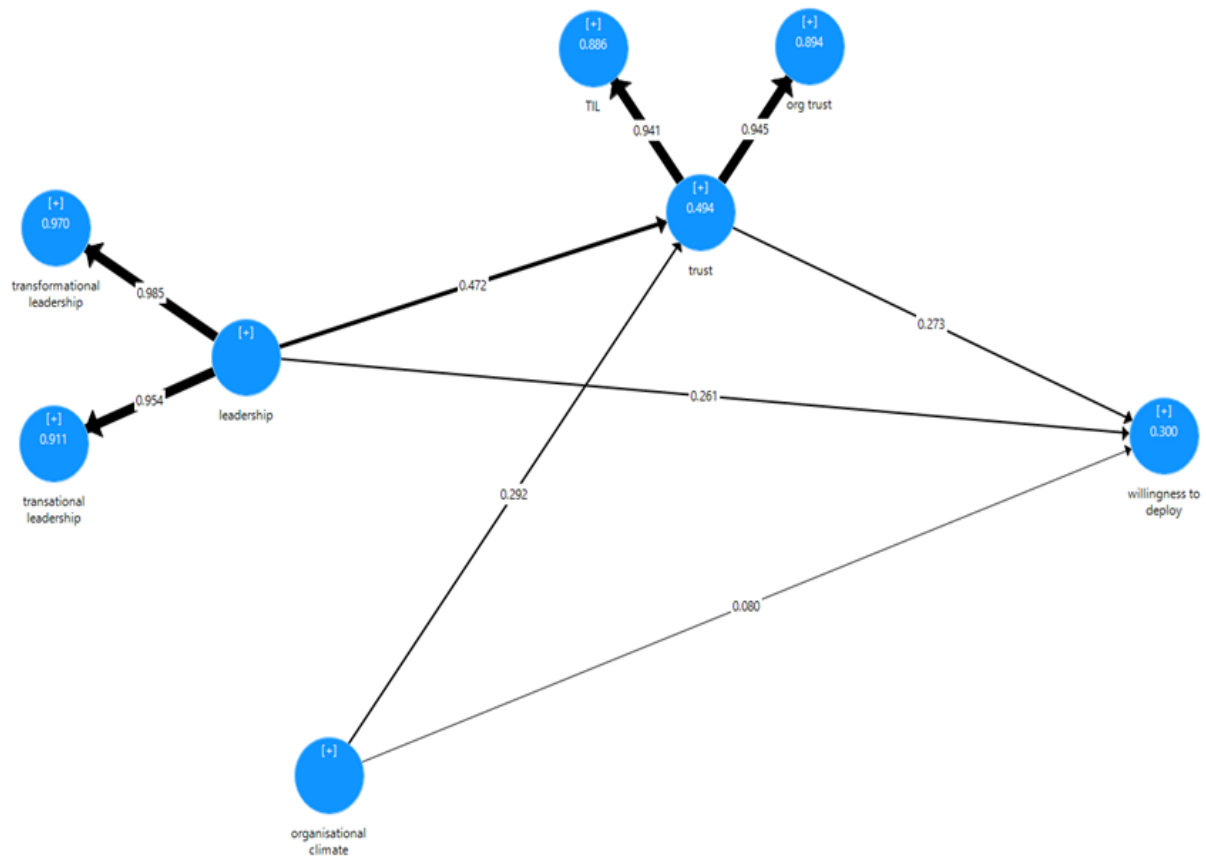
The R-squared values indicate how much variance is explained by the independent variables in the model. The R-squared is the coefficient of determinations. In short, R-squared implies better prediction. The coefficient of determination associated with the willingness endogenous latent variable was ( $r=.30$ ), which indicates that the three latent variables, namely leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust, explain 30% of variance in willingness to deploy. The coefficient of determination associated with trust was 0.49, which means that approximately 49% of the variance in trust is explained by leadership behaviour and organisational climate.

**Table 4.8: Structural model results**

Path	Path coefficient	Bootstrap lower	Bootstrap upper	p-value	Significant
Leadership>TL	0.95	0.94	0.97	.01	Yes
Leadership>TFL	0.98	0.98	0.99	.01	Yes
Leadership >Trust	0.47	0.31	0.60	.01	Yes
Leadership>WD	0.26	0.07	0.44	.01	Yes
OC>Trust	0.29	0.15	0.46	.01	Yes
OC>WD	0.08	-0.06	0.25	.31	No
Trust>TIL	0.94	0.92	0.96	.01	Yes
Trust>Org Trust	0.95	0.93	0.96	.01	Yes
Trust>WD	0.27	0.07	0.47	.01	Yes

Table 4.8 provides the structural model results. In addition, Figure 4.20 shows the visual representation of the structural model with path coefficients. In order to determine which paths between the different variables were significant, the bootstrap method was used. The strength and direction of the relationship between variables are indicated by the path coefficient's values. In addition, the path coefficient also establishes whether the proposed model (see Figure 2.9) is corroborated or not. The path coefficient for leadership and trust was .47, which indicates a moderately positive significant path. The path coefficient for organisational climate and trust was .29, which indicates a low positive but significant path. The path coefficient for

leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy was .26, which indicates a low positive but significant path. The path coefficient for organisational climate and willingness to deploy was .08, which indicates a negligible path. The path coefficient for trust and willingness to deploy was 0.27, which indicates a low positive path.



**Figure 4.20: Structural model results**

Another aim of this study was to test the mediating effect of trust between the independent and dependent variables. This study used the mediation analysis that was explained in Chapter 3 (see Figure 3.1) to determine the mediating effect of trust. Figure 4.20 shows that there was no direct relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy, but there was an indirect relationship between the two variables that were mediated by trust. This means that trust fully mediates the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy.  $H_{14}$  was established and therefore accepted. Figure 4.20 illustrates that trust partially mediates the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy.  $H_{15}$  was thus established and partially accepted.

## **4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter presented and discussed the results of this study. Descriptive statistics were discussed and outlined. The reliability and validity of the variables of interest (leadership, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy) were established and discussed. The 15 hypotheses that were outlined in Chapter 3 were tested, and the results were highlighted. All 15 hypotheses were established and therefore accepted. In general, the model describes a reasonable amount of variance explained by the exogenous latent variables.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research results that were presented in Chapter 4. The main aim of this study was to investigate the influence of leadership behaviours and organisational climate and the mediating role of trust on soldiers' willingness to deploy. In satisfying the objectives of the study that were outlined in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.3), hypotheses were formulated (see Section 3.2) as a way of showing potential relationships between the variables of interests (leadership behaviour, organisational climate, trust, and willingness to deploy). All hypotheses were confirmed and accepted, bringing insight into understanding factors that contribute to soldiers' willingness to deploy. This chapter first discusses the measures of central tendency, followed by the inferential results, which consist of the correlation results and PLS-SEM analysis results.

#### **5.2 DISCUSSION OF MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY**

Trust was measured on a five-point scale and a mean value of 3.46 was found (see Table 4.1), which indicates moderate levels of trust. The low SD (.82) indicates minor differences in how soldiers experienced trust. These results led to the conclusion that soldiers held positive perceptions regarding trust in the military organisation, specifically the SANDF, and their respective leaders. The results are in line with Sweeney's (2010) findings that soldiers trust the military. However, the SANDF should strive to enhance trust. Hamilton (2010) maintains that trust is important in the military and soldiers understand the critical need to develop trust in both the organisation and their leader. Some scholars found various reasons why the military organisation should be concerned about trust. To mention three, the interdependent nature of military deployments or operations requires trust for survival (Sweeney, 2010; Hamilton, 2010). Next, high levels of trust are associated with high morale and unit cohesion (Cassel, 1993). Finally, trust has a positive effect on organisational outcomes such as cooperation, job involvement, and organisational commitment (Zaharia & Hutu, 2016). All these reasons demonstrate the need for the military to

ensure that trust in military leaders and the military organisation is enhanced and maintained.

The mean value for organisational climate was 3.31 (see Table 4.1), which indicates that moderate levels of organisational climate were experienced by the workforce. Insignificant differences were observed as the reported SD was .50. Banda (2019) reported similar results that soldiers experienced moderate levels of organisational climate. The moderate levels of organisational climate indicate that soldiers are satisfied to a certain degree with the climate of the organisation; however, the SANDF should also work towards making the climate in the military more conducive. The climate should be made more conducive in the sense of improving the organisational climate dimensions (see Section 2.5.2). Makhathini and Van Dyk (2018) found that organisational climate enhances the job satisfaction and organisational commitment of soldiers.

The observed mean for leadership behaviour was 3.32 (see Table 4.1), which indicates that respondents experienced moderate levels of leadership behaviour. The SD for the scale that measured leadership behaviour was .75, which is relatively low, which indicated that there were slight disagreements on the perception of leadership in the SANDF. This means that soldiers are slightly satisfied with the behaviour demonstrated by their leaders. Several scholars have indicated that leadership is the core determinant of organisational effectiveness (Boonzaier, 2008; Wong & Cummings, 2009; Aucamp, 2014; Daft, 2015). It is therefore important for organisations to monitor the type of leadership behaviours that exist in the organisation because leadership behaviours have different organisational outcomes.

The willingness to deploy scale had a mean value of 3.87 and a SD of .71 (see Table 4.1). The results indicate that the participants had moderate levels of willingness to deploy and there were slight disagreements in the sample's willingness to deploy. Nkewu (2014) found that willingness to deploy is associated with positive psychological wellbeing and combat readiness. This means that soldiers with high levels of willingness to deploy will be able to cope with the associated psychological challenges and they will be better prepared for combat. As deployment is based on voluntary deployment, the SANDF needs soldiers who

demonstrate high levels of willingness to deploy in order to deploy them and reach the organisation's objectives.

### **5.3 DISCUSSION OF CORRELATION RESULTS**

There is a growing need for the SANDF to deploy its soldiers within and outside the borders of South Africa. During military deployments, soldiers are expected to operate under harsh conditions and it is crucial that soldiers are willing to deploy in order to function effectively. This is because those who are willing to deploy will be better psychologically prepared and will have a positive attitude towards the deployment, which will make them psychologically strong in the way they will deal with deployment challenges and stress (Nkewu, 2014). This study proposed that psychosocial factors such as leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust contribute to soldiers' willingness to deploy. Correlation analysis was conducted in order to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables of this study.

#### **5.3.1 Relationship between transactional leadership and trust**

H<sub>1</sub> postulated that a positive and significant relationship exists between transactional leadership and organisational trust. The results (see Table 4.3) revealed a positive and significant relationship between transactional leadership and organisational trust ( $r=.53$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly, H<sub>2</sub> stated that there is a significant and positive relationship between transactional leadership and trust in a leader, which was accepted ( $r=.56$ ;  $p=0.00$ ). H<sub>5</sub> stated that there is a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership and overall trust ( $r=.56$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). These findings are in line with previous research findings that indicated that followers under transactional leadership develop trust when they see that the transactional leader is consistent in linking effort to rewards (Yasir et al., 2016; Ikonen, 2013). Theron, Engelbrecht, and Krafft (2004) found that transactional leaders use control strategies to align employee attitudes and behaviours. This means that soldiers under a transactional leader will be more concerned with fairness and they will have expectations that the leader will be fair in decision making and be truthful in his or her dealings. Moreover, the results also confirmed findings by Casimir et al. (2006) that transactional leadership is positively related to organisational trust. This is

because transactional leaders gain credibility through the use of fair application of organisational policies, which subsequently leads followers to believe that the organisation supports them, and in return subordinates will remain loyal to the organisation because they trust that the organisation will be good to them (Sweeney et al., 2009). In short, subordinates will develop organisational trust because they perceive that the organisation has fulfilled its contractual obligations. These findings have practical implications for the SANDF as military leaders need to understand that their behaviours have a direct and indirect effect on employees' attitudes and behaviour and that subordinates will constantly monitor their credibility.

### **5.3.2 Relationship between transformational leadership and trust**

The hypothesised ( $H_3$ ) relationship between transformational leadership and organisational trust was confirmed and accepted by this study ( $r=.57$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Along the same lines,  $H_4$  stated that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and trust in a leader. The results revealed that a positive and significant relationship exists between transformational leadership and trust in a leader ( $r=.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Lastly,  $H_6$  stated that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall trust, which was confirmed and accepted. These results are in line with previous research that indicate that transformational leadership positively enhances organisational trust (De Lima Rua & Costa Araújo, 2015), trust in a leader (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), and trust (Theron et al., 2004; Aucamp, 2014).

Transformational leadership is linked to trust because of the value-driven behaviour it promotes. Positive behaviour demonstrated by a transformational leader leads to the development of trust towards the leader and eventually towards the organisation. A transformational leader arouses positive emotions in subordinates and encourages subordinates to commit to the vision of the organisation (Casimir et al., 2006).

The literature indicates that transformational leaders provide individual consideration, demonstrate desirable behaviours, and inspire followers to exert more effort in performing their duties (Wong & Cummings, 2009; Hamid et al., 2018). Another trait of a transformational leader is to intellectually stimulate followers by encouraging them to take risks (Bass et al., 2003; Aucamp, 2014). In order for followers to take



risks, they will need to follow the example of the leader, which means that the leader will need to set an example to the followers, which would then instil trust in the leader (Theron et al., 2004). Transformational leadership practices create a social bond between the transformational leader and his or her followers, and followers see the leader as someone who possesses trustworthiness traits such as integrity, caring, benevolence, and openness (Bews, 2000; Sweeney, 2010). In addition, Sweeney et al. (2009) found that the credibility of a transformational leader is gained from good character and competence. This means that trust-related characteristics prove to the subordinates that the leader is worthy of being trusted and trust in the leader will subsequently develop.

In essence, trust in a leader is the cornerstone of transformational leadership and is a crucial element in the relationship between a leader and his or her followers. When followers trust their leader, they are motivated to go beyond what is expected of them (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The results of this study indicate that trust is important for both interpersonal and organisational relationships and is particularly crucial in the military as the organisation is characterised by interdependent activities and roles. Military leaders with transformational leadership characteristics will inspire motivation and encourage soldiers to buy into the SANDF's objectives and missions; subsequently making subordinates feel trust towards the organisation. The SANDF could benefit from this, as it would mean soldiers would be willing to put the interests of the organisation before their own.

### **5.3.3 Relationship between leadership behaviour and trust**

H<sub>7</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and overall trust, was confirmed and accepted ( $r=.66$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). The confirmation of this relationship is not surprising given the strong argument by previous studies that good leadership behaviour is positively associated with trust (Ikonen, 2013; Yasir et al., 2016). This means that trust is enhanced by leaders' behaviours, such as being honest, creating open communication, and acting as role models. Engelbrecht et al. (2014) confirm that leaders have an influence on how positively employees perceive the organisation. This is because the leader represents the organisation and it is the leader's primary role to influence subordinates to achieve the organisation's goals. The leader's behaviour also

indicates how much the organisation supports and cares for its employees. Trust is a fundamental aspect for leaders to form functioning relationships and encourage cooperation (Casimir et al., 2006). The ability of a leader to establish, extend, and restore trust can therefore be seen as a key leadership competency.

The results hold potential benefits for the SANDF because military leaders can win the hearts of their subordinates by developing and maintaining trust. It is important that military leaders recognise the importance of building trust among their subordinates, as it will not only benefit the leader-follower relationship but the SANDF as well. Sweeney et al. (2009) found a number of organisational outcomes that are linked to trust in leadership, including stronger cohesive relationships, increased employee wellbeing, increased group member satisfaction, and improved organisational effectiveness. These outcomes are necessary for the SANDF; for example, if subordinates have trust in their leader and the organisation, it will lead to higher morale and vertical cohesion, which will then create the perception that the leaders will be supportive during deployments and that the same cohesion will exist during deployment, which will enable soldiers to cope better with deployment challenges. In support of this notion, Garrido and Muñoz (2006) found that high morale and cohesion shield soldiers from deployment stressors (see Section 2.2.1) and increase soldiers' performance. Moreover, Jelusic (2004) found that morale and cohesion enhance soldiers' will to fight. In the South African context, Nkewu (2014) found a positive relationship between morale and willingness to deploy. This emphasises that soldiers will be dedicated to accomplish the SANDF's mission despite the challenges associated with deployment. The SANDF has an important duty to fulfil as it is seen as the midwife of peacekeeping missions and deploying soldiers who have the "willingness to deploy factor" could be advantageous.

The other benefit of trust and leadership behaviour is that trust creates greater perceptions of the leader's effectiveness (Sweeney et al., 2009). The military is a structured organisation and leaders are expected to give orders to subordinates in order to minimise risks. Trust therefore becomes a crucial element as subordinates should trust that the leader is competent and will give accurate orders. Subordinates should then be willing to accept the leader's influence without a shadow of doubt. Sweeney (2007) found that without trust, orders given by the leader will not be executed well, which could result in fatal incidents and the interest of the

organisation being neglected. Soldiers who trust their leader and the military would be more likely to believe that their leaders have good intentions and would think positively of all behaviours and decisions by commanders.

Moreover, when there is trust between the leader and subordinates, it will enhance the leader's confidence in leading his or her platoon to deployment and could possibly lead to leadership effectiveness. Based on the social exchange theory, DeConinck (2010) found that employees tend to generalise the treatment they receive from their leader to the organisation as a whole. Thus, when employees trust their leader and feel supported, that perception of support will spill over to the organisation. In support, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) found that followers who trust their leader work effectively and have high levels of organisational commitment. On the contrary, when leaders do not live up to followers' expectations, it could lead to mistrust, which has negative consequences for the organisation.

#### **5.3.4 Relationship between organisational climate and trust**

H<sub>8</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and trust in a leader ( $r=.54$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), H<sub>9</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and organisational trust ( $r=.61$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), and H<sub>10</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and overall trust, were all accepted.

These results are in line with those of McMurray and Scott (2013), who state that organisational climate correlates with trust. This means that positive organisational climate creates positive employee attitude, which in this case is trust. The perceptions that soldiers hold about the climate of the military organisation will affect their level of trust in the organisation. This study focused on the human relation, open system, rational goal, and internal process quadrants of organisational climate (see Table 2.1), and it was found that the participants experienced moderate levels of organisational climate. These results highlight the impact that employee perceptions have on organisational outcomes.

### **5.3.5 Relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy**

H<sub>11</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy ( $r=.45$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), was confirmed and accepted. No previous study was found that has explored the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy. However, Nkewu (2014) found that confidence in leaders evoked willingness to deploy in soldiers. According to Kelloway et al. (2012), employees who have confidence in their leader experience a sense of safety and comfort. This is because employees feel that their leader cares about them, and therefore feel less exposed to being harmed by their leader, which leads to an increased feeling of psychological safety.

The result emphasises the critical role that leaders play in the organisation and demonstrates that soldiers actually re-evaluate leadership before they express their willingness to deploy. The military organisation is mission orientated and depends on its human resources to achieve its mission and objectives. The SANDF's role in peacekeeping operations is very important for Africa's stability and economic development. The willingness of soldiers to deploy is therefore important to maintain a combat-ready force.

### **5.3.6 Relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy**

H<sub>12</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy ( $r=.35$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), was accepted. This means that willingness to deploy increases when a soldier's work environment fulfils his or her needs and expectations. No prior study was found that has explored the relationship between these constructs. However, Aucamp (2014) found that employees are willing to take risks when they perceive their work environment as conducive to their needs. Nkewu (2014) found that autonomy is positively associated with willingness to deploy; autonomy was one of the 15 dimensions of organisational climate for this study. This study confirms that the work climate in which employees operate contributes significantly to their attitude to the organisation.

### 5.3.7 Relationship between trust and willingness to deploy

H<sub>13</sub>, which states that there is a significant positive relationship between trust and willingness to deploy ( $r=.49$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), was accepted. This means that high levels of trust result in higher levels of willingness to deploy. No previous research has been conducted with regard to trust and willingness to deploy in the military, in particular the SANDF. However, Bahrami, et al (2016) found that trust increases positive employee attitudes. In addition, Sweeney (2010) found that trust significantly contributes to followers' willingness to follow the leader's vision, which is also the organisation's vision. These results demonstrate the benefits of developing trust in the organisation. Engelbrecht et al. (2014) found that when employees have trust in their leader, they tend to believe that the leader will have their best interest at heart when making decisions. Employees will therefore be more willing to be engaged in their jobs.

Empirical tests conducted by Mayer et al. (1995) found that employees tend to be willing to engage in behaviours that can put them at risk when they trust their leader and organisation. Similarly, this study found that trust enhances soldiers' willingness to deploy. These results are not surprising, as Nkewu (2014) found that positive relations with others enhance willingness to deploy. Trust may prompt soldiers to reciprocate to the military organisation by exhibiting willingness to deploy. Soldiers feel obligated to commit to the SANDF's objective and mission and will be willing to avail themselves for deployment even if death is a possibility.

These findings could have benefits for the SANDF as trust will enable cooperation and assurance that military leaders will be supportive of subordinates during deployment because of the impression those leaders have created during peacetime (at the unit). This line of argument is consistent with the social exchange theory principle, which suggests that employees develop the need to maintain the reciprocal relationship with the organisation when they perceive that the organisation supports them. Furthermore, the literature indicates that military leaders have an influence on soldiers' health and adaptability to combat stressors (see Section 2.7). The SANDF should therefore invest in training military leaders to demonstrate effective and supportive leadership behaviours that will enhance follower trust, as this study found

that both transactional leadership and transformational leadership positively correlate with trust.

## **5.4 DISCUSSION OF PARTIAL LEAST SQUARES (PLS) ANALYSIS RESULTS**

The PLS analysis results are discussed in this section. The measurement model results are discussed first, followed by the structural model results.

### **5.4.1 Measurement model**

The measurement model was used to determine the psychometric properties of the scales. This means determining the validity and reliability of the constructs that were included in the proposed model. The internal reliability of the scales and subscales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which ranged from .60 to .94 (see Table 4.2). Furthermore, the composite reliability coefficient of the constructs ranged from .90 to .96 (see Table 4.4), which exceeded the minimum acceptable level of .70 as suggested by Hulland (1999). It can therefore be concluded that the measurement scales that were used for this study reached adequate internal consistency reliability. In order to determine the convergent validity, the AVE of each latent variable was assessed, which ranged from .42 to .83 (see Table 4.4). Organisational climate (.41) and willingness to deploy (.49) failed to meet the acceptable threshold of .50 as suggested by (Wong, 2013).

### **5.4.2 Structural model analysis**

The PLS-SEM was used to test the effect of the influence of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables. The criteria that were used to assess the structural model (see Figure 4.20) in this study included the coefficient of determination and path coefficients. The results revealed that the coefficient of determination associated with willingness to deploy was ( $r=.30$ ), meaning that leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust only explain 30% of the variance in willingness to deploy. Only 49% ( $r=.49$ ) variance of trust was explained by organisational climate and leadership behaviour.

There were also various paths that represent the relationships between the different variables in the structural model. The bootstrap confidence level of 95% was used to determine the significance of the various path coefficients. The path coefficients confirmed that leadership behaviour had a direct influence on the trust levels of soldiers towards the military and its leaders. This result confirms the important role that leaders play in influencing soldiers' attitudes and behaviour (Dhladhla, 2011). The path coefficients further confirmed the positive effect of organisational climate on trust. The results highlight that soldiers monitor their work environment. When the work environment is conducive and supportive, they gain trust towards the organisation and its leaders. The path coefficients also confirmed that trust has a positive influence on willingness to deploy. These results corroborate the findings by Aucamp (2014) that trust facilitates cooperation. The results are understandable, because the more soldiers have trust in their leaders and the military organisation, the more willing they will be to deploy.

The study also had an interest in investigating the mediating effect of trust on the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy. H<sub>14</sub> stated that trust mediates the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy. This study found that trust fully mediates the effects of organisational climate on willingness to deploy (see Figure 4.20), which supports H<sub>14</sub>. No previous study was found that has explored these constructs together. This study found that organisational climate has an effect on willingness to deploy through trust. In short, soldiers who experience a good organisational climate will have higher levels of trust, and this trust will make them feel comfortable to exert higher levels of willingness to deploy with their unit. The practical implication of these results is that the SANDF must pay attention to positive organisational climate (consisting of internal process, human relation, open system, and rational goal quadrants) and fulfilment of trust in order to have soldiers with higher levels of willingness to deploy.

H<sub>15</sub> stated that trust mediates the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy. The path coefficient results revealed that leadership had both a direct and indirect effect on willingness to deploy (see Figure 4.20). This means that trust partially mediates the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy. This led to the partial acceptance of H<sub>15</sub>. No study was found that has explored this relationship. However, Casimir et al. (2006) found that trust

mediates the relationship between leaders and employees' extra effort. In addition, Collins and Jacobs (2002) and Daft (2015) found that subordinates will follow directives and take on risks of the leaders they trust. When subordinates trust their leader and organisation, they will suspend their individual doubts and personal motives and direct their efforts toward a common team goal set by the leader (Dirks, 1999). The practical implication of this result is that the SANDF should ensure that the leaders enhance the trust levels of soldiers because if trust is high, willingness to deploy will also be high.

## **5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the empirical findings of the study. The study provided relevant information on why the military organisation should ensure that commanders demonstrate behaviours that will enhance trust and ensure that the climate is conducive in order to motivate subordinates to demonstrate willingness to deploy. The next chapter provides the conclusion, limitations, and recommendations of the research.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of leadership, organisational climate, and the mediating role of trust on soldiers' willingness to deploy. This study was motivated by the growing interest in military deployments. Much of the literature focuses on combat readiness factors but neglects to consider whether soldiers are willing to deploy. This study attempted to fill this gap. The literature indicates that military deployments are never easy as soldiers are exposed to harsh conditions. Soldiers face many physical and psychological challenges that threaten their psychological wellbeing. It was therefore relevant to investigate soldiers' willingness to deploy. If the mind is not willing, executing deployment tasks, as well as coping with the challenges that come with deployments, could prove to be difficult. As previously mentioned, South Africa's commitment to contributing to peace support missions is very important for Africa's economic development and safety, and the importance of having a large number of soldiers who are willing to deploy is crucial. A review of the literature emphasised that deployments are based on soldiers' willingness to deploy, which could possibly affect the combat readiness of the force.

In order to achieve the aim of this study, a quantitative approach was used. The methodology for collecting data was through utilising existing measuring instruments. The participants of this study were from two infantry units (9 SAI Bn and 4 SAI Bn). The study enriched the existing literature by creating awareness of how psychosocial factors influence soldiers' willingness to deploy. The study was exploratory in nature and it holds benefits for the SANDF. The important findings of this study are the confirmation of the significant links between the independent variables (leadership behaviour and organisational climate), dependent variable (willingness to deploy), and the mediating variable (trust). The results revealed that there were positive correlations, as hypothesised. The strongest correlation that was established was between transformational leadership and trust. Furthermore, the results of this study revealed that transformational leadership facilitated the development of stronger trust in a leader than organisational trust. These results validate the notion that transformational leadership forms the basis for building trusting relationships.

This means that the behaviour of immediate commanders could make or break subordinates' trust. A leader can inspire subordinates to trust him or her and follow him or her willingly to military deployment even if death is a possibility. The results of this study prove that leadership is the art of influencing subordinates so that they willingly strive to achieve organisational objectives (Igbaekemen, 2014). The relationship between organisational climate and trust also had a strong correlation. Leaders are responsible for the climate that exists in organisations and this necessitates leaders to be aware of not only their behaviour but also how organisational structures and systems may impact subordinates' attitudes and behaviours. The results also confirmed that willingness to deploy increases when trust is high.

The PLS-SEM results revealed that trust fulfilled an important mediating role. In essence, trust partially mediated the relationship between leadership behaviour and willingness to deploy. Moreover, trust fully mediated the relationship between organisational climate and willingness to deploy. The importance of building trust in the military organisation cannot be overemphasised. This study showed that it is important that the SANDF pays careful attention to psychosocial factors in the workplace in order to have soldiers who are willing to deploy. Immediate commanders should strive to maintain a positive work environment to enhance employee trust in order to maximise willingness to deploy.

## **6.2 LIMITATIONS**

Although this study provided insights into willingness to deploy and how it is influenced by leadership behaviour, organisational climate, and trust, some limitations need to be considered for future research. The following limitations are acknowledged by the researcher:

- Multiple sources of data could be considered, such as assessing how trust in co-workers could influence willingness to deploy and allow leaders to rate their own leadership style.
- Caution should be exercised in generalising the results to the whole SANDF as only two infantry units were part of this study. This means that out of the

four arms of services, only the SA Army was considered. The results are based on a small sample size (N=206).

- The poor convergent validity of organisational climate (.41) and willingness to deploy (.49) also contributed to the limitations of this study.

Despite the limitations listed above, this study contributes to literature on understanding willingness to deploy and it addressed the research gap that was identified. The study will hopefully elicit future research on these psychosocial factors and other work factors that may have an influence on soldiers' willingness to deploy.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study provided insights into the influence of psychosocial factors on soldiers' willingness to deploy. This section discusses recommendations for intervention strategies and recommendations for future research in order to gain comprehensive understanding:

- Future research should be conducted that includes a representation of all arms of service as the sample for this study entailed members from two infantry units (9 SAI Bn and 4 SAI Bn) only.
- The measurement of organisational climate within the military context is an important issue that needs attention. The literature indicates that different organisations have different dimensions. It is suggested that future research should develop an organisational climate measurement scale specifically for the SANDF.
- This study was a stepping stone in raising awareness of the psychosocial factors that enhance willingness to deploy among soldiers. Future research should aim to expand this construct by investigating other factors that may contribute to soldiers' willingness to deploy. For example, in considering what motivates a soldier to deploy, it must be assumed that more than one factor will influence his or her decision. Financial rewards are a big part of military deployments and it would be worthwhile if future research could explore the effect of such factors on soldiers' willingness to deploy. In addition, it is suggested that future research should not only focus on factors that could

possibly enhance willingness to deploy but also factors that could inhibit willingness to deploy.

- Organisational interventions and programmes intended to increase soldiers' willingness to deploy could be planned around the development of transactional and transformational leader behaviours at different leadership levels because these leadership behaviours increase trust.
- The programmes should also be aimed at teaching military leaders how to build a work climate that will foster unit cohesion. Moreover, such leadership development interventions should be aimed at enhancing leaders' willpower that will enable the leader to persuade uncooperative subordinates to accept the leader's influence.

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